July/August 2004 ISSUE

Profile
Carmen Claudio
Entrepreneur
Extraodinaire
PAGE 17

Alternative CENTRAL

A Publication for Central PA's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community.

Central Sighting – Harrisburg - A "must stop by" for Pride month, 714 Strawberry manager Joe Leathers' motto is, "We're here and successful because of our customers." He recently gave the popular spot the "Queer Eye" with a classy redecoration inside, complete with neon lighting fixtures, restored ceiling tiles and a new tile floor.

International dance diva Pepper MaShay headlines Pride Festival of Central PA, Saturday, July 31, noon to 7 p.m. Riverfront Park, Harrisburg. She is joined by Natalie Darkes and The Voodoo Lovehounds. Schedule of events below.

QAF Soundtrack Diva Pepper MaShay Headlines PRIDE

"Queer as Folk" soundtrack diva vocalist, circuit performer, dance artist with three Billboard chart-topping dance anthems in the past two years, international dance diva Pepper MaShay has continually connected with the audience that seems to admire her strength, her fierce presence, her ability to feel real.

Pepper MaShay is recognized for the international hit, **"Dive In The Pool"**, the centerpiece of the first **Queer As Folk** soundtrack as well as **"Signed, Sealed, Delivered"**, **"I Got My Pride"** and **"I Can't Stop"**, pure New York style Circuit House Diva floorfillers.

Lending support to gay youth, Pepper has also been very generous with her time and energy for AIDS related organizations and has actively raised money in the fight. She has been honored by the City of West Hollywood and has been involved with the efforts of several groups including AIDS Project Los Angeles and StopAIDS.org in San Francisco. Fresh from performances at Los Angeles, Palm Beach and Albuquerque Pride Festivals, Pepper invites you – **"Let's Get Soaking Wet!"**

(www.peppermashay.com)

Natalie Darkes

After over 20 years of performing live, Natalie exudes a mature, ever adapting style and sense of

continued on page 15

SPARC Nixes Right Wing Attack

When State Rep. Daryl Metcalfe, R-12th, and the 10 other co-sponsors of Pennsylvania's 1996 Defense of Marriage Act filed suit against a same-sex couple who applied for, and were denied, a marriage license in Berks County, Statewide Pennsylvania Rights Coalition (SPARC) ignited a few flames.

"We're quick to respond. Our detractors are sleepless," says Scott Conlan, SPARC executive director.

Butler Diversity Cooperative coordinator Reid H. Ahl and SPARC regional representative flew into action with a quick response to the Butler *Eagle* newspaper.

He noted to Metcalfe and his co-sponsors that Article 1, Section 1, of Pennsylvania's constitution guarantees our inherent right to pursue happiness. "These conservative lawmakers are acting out of their fear of change and because they are ill-informed or narrow-minded on this basic human right. Homosexuality is not a choice. People do not choose their sexual orientation or gender identity," Ahl wrote.

Noting that a business owner has joined the lawmakers' lawsuit, saying that providing domestic-partnership benefits would be costly, Ahl exploded that hateful myth by explaining: "Not so. More than a third of Fortune 500 companies offer domestic-partnership benefits, and doing so has not increased the cost of providing health insurance. Actually, the most costly health event for companies is the birth of a premature child," he noted.

"These lawmakers are also acting now because they are concerned. Under Berks County rules, a judge could overturn the county clerk's denial of the application, ruling that the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional. How appropriate that would be, because the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional," Ahl observed.

Lehigh Valley Prom Draws 60 Couples

A public declaration of a belief makes it stronger within those making the statement. When 60 couples in pastel gowns and tuxedos gathered in May at the Radisson Hotel Bethlehem for Prizm Prom, local youth made their statement. Lehigh Valley's first gay prom was officially under way.

Sponsored by Haven, a youth group of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, the prom was open to all: homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender, intersex, questioning, allied and others - a group commonly labeled "gay". Many who attended said they feel uncomfortable attending their own high school proms.

Most ranged in age from 14 to 21 and hailed from Lehigh Valley

continued on page 17

Alternative Central Interviews Author Patricia Nell Warren

by Alexander Renault

Trying to write an introduction for Patricia Nell Warren is like trying to review the French Revolution in 500 words or less. You just skim the surface. Warren is an author, educator, activist, free speech advocate, and social critic expressing herself for four decades.

Warren's smash 1974 novel, *The Front Runner*, is a classic. Her other critically acclaimed novels were big sellers: *Harlan's Race*, *One In the Sun* (a book for which Warren researched Native American history

for over a decade), *Billy's Boy*, and *The Wild Man*. She enjoys a readership of over twenty million worldwide. Her books have been translated into 10 languages. Warren's political commentary has appeared in *The L.A. Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Chicago Tribune*, *The Advocate*, *Genre*, *Out*, and the *Philadelphia Gay News*. Warren's "Left Field" column published monthly in *A&U* magazine explores HIV and public health concerns.

Alexander Renault: Let's start with your column *Left Field* in *A&U Magazine*. The September 2003 column, "Texas Justice," was unnerving. While people are celebrating

continued on page 15

Stallions Hosts Pride After-Party

It may be the most important question of the summer: Where is the best after-Pride party? Don't worry, *Alternative Central* has the answer.

The best party is at the club that's been voted Harrisburg's best gay bar six years running — Stallions Entertainment Complex!

Stallions' own DJ Barry B will host an all-request dance party that kicks off an hour earlier than the club's usual opening time.

"We pack 'em in here after the Pride festivities," he said. "We pump everything up an hour early, so everyone gets an extra hour to party. It's the place to be!"

From 9 p.m. until 2 a.m., Stallions will keep the Pride celebration going in style with balloons, party favors and confetti cannons. If you need a break from dancing, visit another of the three floors to shoot some pool or relax in Groove, the retro-styled video lounge.

So don't waste time looking for the after-party! Go directly to Stallions at 706 N. Third Street in downtown Harrisburg. For more information, go to www.stallionsclub.com.

Destination Point:
Key West in
Off-Season

PAGE 9

Provincetown
Getaway Made Easy

PAGE 7

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Publisher's Letter

Pride Against the Odds

Summer is Pride Season all over the US. But not for everyone. "Barring a miracle, the family as it has been known for more than five millennia will crumble," warns evangelist and psychologist (?) Dr. James Dobson. He blames Massachusetts same-sex marriages commencing May 17.

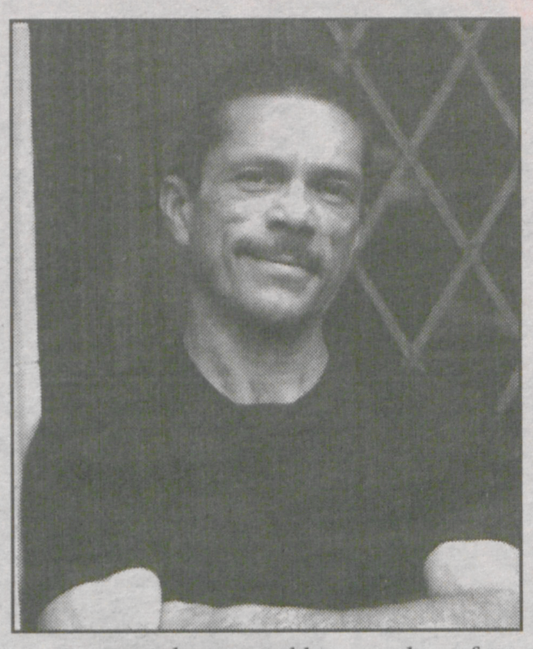
May 17 came and went. Fears of "the queers are coming, the queers are coming" have been hyped more than Y2K. No rapture, no floods, no earthquakes, no locusts. No nothing. We're all just too normal for anything to happen. We're about the business of loving one another and making public affirmations of that love. We're not "in *your* face". You've been in *our* faces far too long. We can accept a diversity of opinion (like the fact that you don't want to marry a person of the same sex or your religious views are from the Middle Ages). You can tolerate no opinion except your own. It's time for you to grow up – if you can.

Another public affirmation of our community is Saturday, July 31, when the region gathers 5,000 strong to celebrate our diversity at PRIDE. The banks of the Susquehanna River nourish friendships and renewed activism in the face of daunting odds fueled by hate: Once again, we're fair game in electoral politics.

Since last year's event, we've spoken truth to power by linking arms with 800 folk who told Rev. Fred Phelps he's from Mars. A second appearance here by his cult drew a peaceful response from local churches.

Recently, Judy Shepard told several hundred people in York about her murdered son Matthew. She also told us get off our queer butts and vote – finally. SPARC repelled the anti-gay amendments of men in the General Assembly who live by fear and fear alone. They'd rather see Pennsylvania wither on the economic vine – on so many issues, not only queer stuff - than join the 21st Century. If they can't have it their way, they prefer to wreck what's before them. Before too long, they won't have anything left to destroy except their own back yard.

Like the Sprint billboards boast: We're here. We're clear.



Read Our Beads?

Upon our first anniversary, we find ourselves being read by both gay and straight readers. We've been told we're "a good read". The team couldn't ask for a better compliment. We relish the thought that folks – gay and straight – pick up our newspaper because it's a good read.

We're a good read because we've attracted former New York Blade News and POZ magazine managing editor Winnie McCroy as our New York City correspondent. Former big Apple magazine editor Suzy Martin is our Philadelphia correspondent. Vermont-based Ric Kadour Kasini is our Men's Health columnist. These writers join Sophia Gonzales, our State College correspondent;Adrienne Mansfield, representing the Williamsport Region; and Rachel Thompson, filing from Allentown/Bethlehem.

Besides profiling the region's business and activist folk who make our world go round, our freelancers have interviewed Andy Warhol's family members, Obie-Award winner David Drake, the one-of-a-kind Larry Kramer, Rita Mae Brown, Patricia Nell Warren, and Michael Thomas Ford. Next issue, we talk to Hairspray's Harvey Feirstein.

We've also been selected for representation in the national advertising market by RIVENDELL MEDIA. They currently represent The Advocate, OUT, Instinct (voted the Best Alternative Lifestyle Magazine in 2003 and 2004), and the Windows Media Group collection of publications.

In celebrating our first anniversary, we've been of service to more than nearly 90 advertisers in our first six issues. I personally thank each advertiser for risking with us on our publishing adventure.

Frank Pizzoli
Publisher & Editor

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

First, I'd like to thank you for your wonderful publication. It's been a much-needed addition to our community. I've been picking it up in Lancaster - and, yes, I'll send in my subscription.

I'm writing about Ted Martin's coverage of Scranton's new ordinance in March/April. In it he states that Lancaster's Human Relations Ordinance does not include gender identity. It actually does - the coverage was added along with the inclusion of sexual orientation in November 2001. It pre-dates the extension of such coverage in many other cities in the Commonwealth, including Philadelphia. I know because I made sure it was included in the revised ordinance.

The official document can be found by visiting www.cityoflancasterpa.com and viewing the City Code: Code of the City of Lancaster, Part II, General Legislation, Chapter 125-Discrimination, § 125-4. Definitions, SEXUAL ORIENTATION — Male or female homosexuality, heterosexuality, bisexuality and any other gender identity, by practice or as perceived by others. [Amended 11-27-2001 by Ord. No. 10-2001].

Thank you,
Mark T. Stoner
Lancaster, PA

Newspage

Harrisburg Men's Chorus Needs a Few Good Men

After a reorganization to revive its ranks, Harrisburg Men's Chorus is looking for new members. Requirement: You must like to sing. In recent years, the popular singing group has been part of the regional entertainment and benefit circuit. David Walker will serve as the choral group's new director.

The group will meet at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, 1280 Clover Lane (off of Eisenhower Drive) September 12, 7 p.m. and every Sunday thereafter for rehearsal until their concert date on December 11. Men interested in joining are invited to attend the September 12 meeting. If you have any questions, call David Payne, 233-4353, or Tim Coleman, 433-0184.

York Struggles with Including "Sexual Orientation"

York county commissioner Doug Kilgore reports "complaints from people throughout York County" indicating "many constituents don't want the human relations board to include protection for homosexuals."

The complaints came after the county human relations commission considered expansion of existing discrimination laws to include sexual orientation. "This issue is pretty emotional for people," Kilgore said.

At a recent meeting, Kilgore and his two commissioner colleagues were asked by Roy C. Jones, Dover, not to expand protections to include homosexuals. Jones chairs the York Area American Family Association. He asked that commissioners protect the sanctity of marriage as a union between "one man and one woman." He said that most people in conservative York County support his values. What basic human rights protections for homosexuals have to do with the legal definition of marriage wasn't immediately clear.

"Make no mistake about it, radical homosexual activists are ignoring the rule of law and using local human relations governing bodies and subsequently local courts to cloud the original intent and go after the institution of marriage and dismantle it piece by piece," Jones said.

Judge Nixes Allentown Gay Rights Ordinance

Lehigh County Judge Alan M. Black said Allentown's gay-rights ordinance that expanded anti-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity violates a state statute. His ruling affects only the city.

Black acknowledged that many private employers and government entities have adopted regulations prohibiting discrimination based on sexual identity. "However, it is not for this court to decide whether such legislation is desirable or beneficial or in the public interest," Black wrote in his opinion. "That decision is to be made by the appropriate branch of government."

"It's a complete victory," said Randall L. Wenger, the Lancaster lawyer who represented four landlords, one of whom is also a business owner and employer, in challenging the ordinance. "It allows them to exercise their religious conscience in the way that they see fit," Wenger said.

"Personally, I am deeply disappointed," said Nicholas Butterfield, Allentown's human relations officer. He said he could not say how often he has fielded discrimination complaints based on the new law. In summer of 2002, city police investigated anti-gay hate mail sent to several city officials and gayactivists.

"I thought this was striking out on a road that was including all people in our society," Butterfield said. "I was hoping for a ruling that would recognize that need." *Alternative Central* wonders if we'll see a return to laws allowing people to refuse services to African Americans on religious or other grounds.

Meanwhile, the US Senate passed a Federal Hate Crimes Bill by a vote of 65-33.

As expected PA Senator Arlen Specter voted yes and PA Senator Rick Santorum voted no.

Headlines You'd Love to Read

Queer Members of PA General Assembly Outed (Finally)

Queer PA Legislators Grow Spines and Come Out (Finally)

PA Queer Activist Groups Stop Protecting Turf (Finally)

Mrs. Cheney's Lesbian Book Banned

Last issue we noted that VP wife Lynne Cheney had published a steaming lesbian novel aptly named "Sisters". This issue, we inform you the Bush Administration put the kibosh on Penguin, the book publisher. Reports indicate that the book, only days before it was going to be republished, was yanked.

For readers who want to see a glimpse at the book that dare not be published, you can see excerpts here:

http://thelist.c.topica.com/maacbo6aa6iW0b4Ee6dbaehnyv/

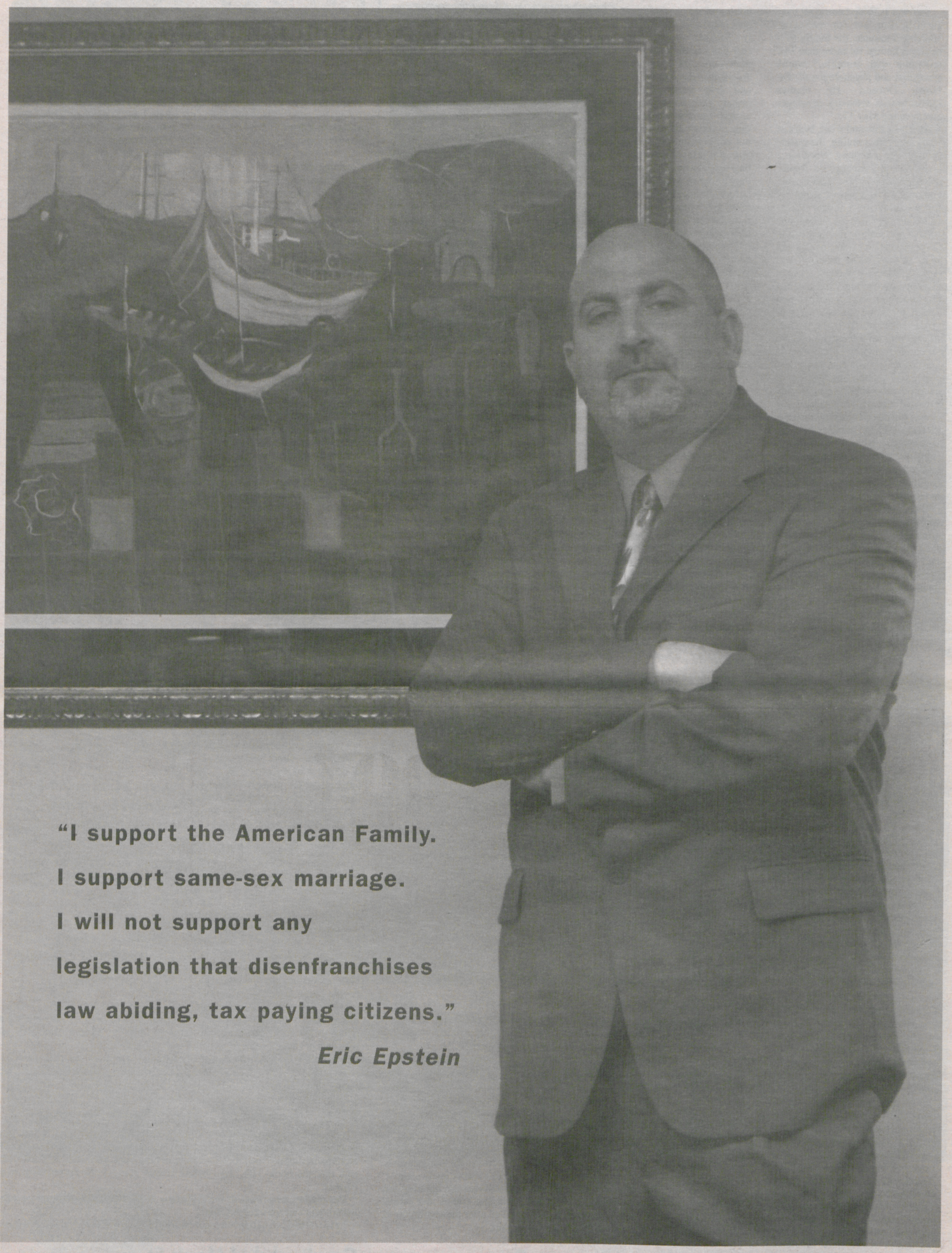
Gay Baghdad Man's Story Film Topic

A gay Baghdad man whose online diary became one of the most read publications in the days leading up to the US-led war against Saddam Hussein will have his story turned into a motion picture. Calling himself Salem Pax, his blog attracted hundreds of thousands of readers as he wrote about the political climate in Iraq and being gay in a dictatorship.

As bombs fell in Baghdad his blog fell silent and people began worry that he was dead. A week later he was back on line describing events. His diary was turned into a book, The Baghdad Blog. Now, British film company Intermedia wants to make a movie about the mysterious young man.

Meanwhile, Rush Limbaugh noted on his radio broadcast that he thought

continued on page 12



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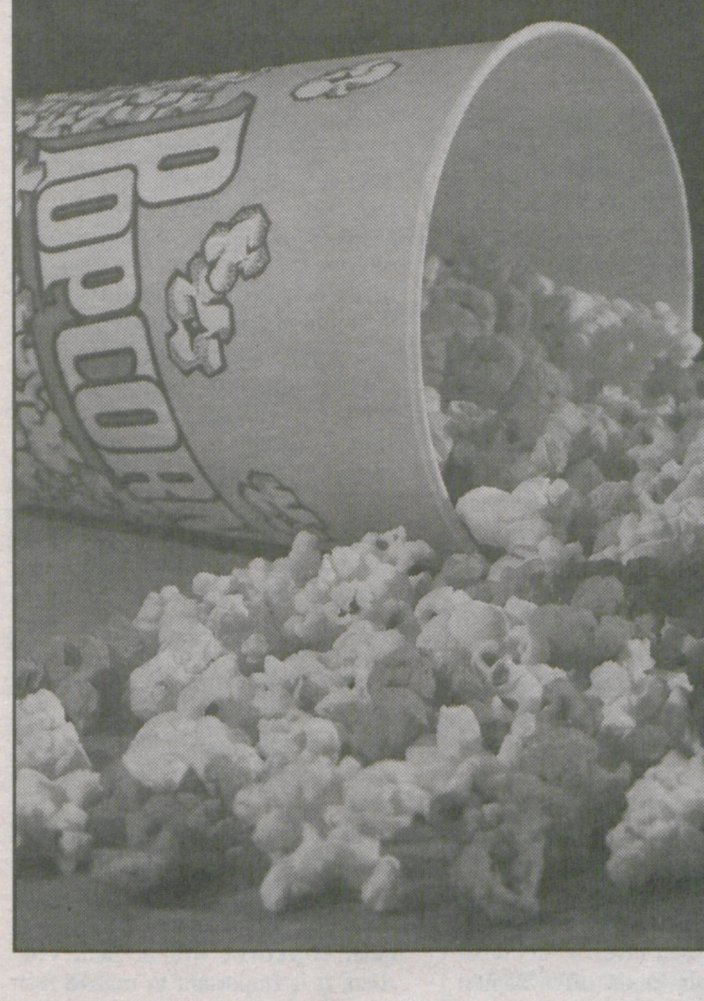

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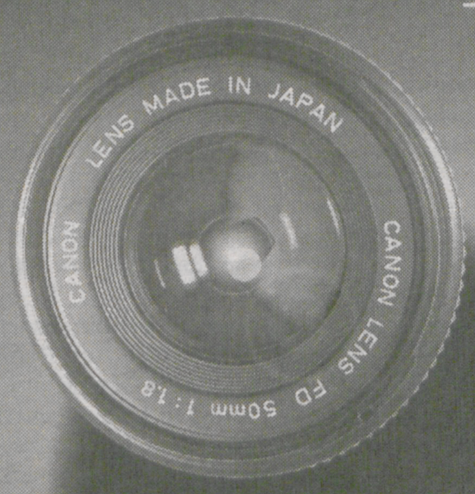

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Marriage – One Door Open

by Derek J. Cordier, Esquire

It seems everyone is talking about "the summer of gay love" - well at least in Massachusetts they are. So what does all this marriage talk mean for committed lesbian and gay relationships here in Pennsylvania - nothing legally, but at least morally, one door has opened with only 49 to go.

Here in Pennsylvania, since we are one of the 38 states with Defense of Marriage Act legislation, no lesbian or gay marriage, performed in Massachusetts or elsewhere, will be recognized. Therefore, no Pennsylvania court will treat you as married and you will be unable to get a divorce. In fact, even in Massachusetts and Vermont you have to establish residency to obtain a divorce.

Canada allows lesbians and gays from the US to be married there and recognizes such unions. Vermont allows out-of-staters to obtain civil unions. There was not a residency requirement for marrying in Massachusetts until the Massachusetts Governor, by use of his executive powers "resurrected" a 1913 law, which assets that no out-of-state marriage may take place if the marriage would be void in the home state. Clearly, this is a discriminatory action that will be fought out in the courts.

Some cities and towns in Massachusetts were issuing licenses in violation of the Governor's order, but that process has stopped. For the near future, only Massachusetts residents may be married. Residency in Massachusetts can be shown by documentary evidence, such as a utility bill, bank statement, driver's license, voter registration, lease, etc. How much evidence is necessary is up to the Clerk of the city or town.

There are more than 1,500 federal and 600 Pennsylvania state rights and privileges conferred upon married couples that lesbian and gay couples do not share. Some of the most important rights lesbian and gay couples are excluded from include, hospital visitation, Social Security benefits, health insurance, estate taxes, inheritance rights, retirement savings such as 401(k)s and IRAs, family leave, home ownership protections for the elderly in need of nursing home care, pensions, and the rights and responsibilities as to children.

Even in Massachusetts, some of these protections, such as health insurance may be problematic, since many times corporations decide who qualifies for those benefits.

Also, because of the Federal Defense of Marriage Act, lesbian and gay couples in Massachusetts are not entitled to federal benefits such as filing joint tax returns or Social Security survivor benefits. Social Security survivor benefits alone result in an average of over $5,500.00 income loss upon the death of a partner. Lesbian and gay insurance costs are higher because married couples pay less. Shouldn't we get a refund for all of the benefits that we have to pay for married couples?

Presently, the most a Pennsylvania lesbian or gay couple can do to protect their rights is to have Wills, Powers of Attorney for Healthcare and Finances, and if necessary, a Cohabitation Agreement. All of those documents are legally recognized and enforceable here in Pennsylvania. The only other action we as a group can do to advance the cause of equality is to vote. If you are lesbian or gay and do not exercise your right to vote in the coming election, you lose your right to complain when the door is closed.

Ryan Stroup Mounts Phila. Solo Exhibit

Local visual artist Ryan Stroup, profiled in a recent issue of *Alternative Central*, mounted a solo exhibit last month in Philadelphia's

Galleria es Arte, located in charming Olde City.

"Since a successful opening at Mechanicsburg's 2nd Floor Gallery, I've been swamped with opportunities," Stroup says.

He also has a painting in Lancaster's Museum of Art as part of their 42nd Annual Open Art Exhibit. Stroup's work has also appeared in Mechanicsburg's 3rd Annual Art Walk, where he showcased his paintings and ceramics at the Joseph T. Simpson Library. His continues to show at the 2nd Floor Gallery, Lemoyne's Freehand gallery, and the Art Association of Harrisburg.

Stroup aborted his goal of opening a gallery in Harrisburg. "Too many obstacles, slow response, lots of PR and programs, but no real help for a small start-up," he said. "I'm taking my business plan to Lancaster or Philadelphia, where they actually respond."

The Basics of Mutual Fund Investing

Benn J. Smith
Financial Consultant
AXA Advisors, LLC

You may be one of the record number of investors flocking to the mutual fund marketplace these days, seeking the potential for higher rates of return. Or, perhaps you have invested in mutual funds for many years. In either case, this back-to-basics discussion of mutual fund investing may benefit you.

A mutual fund pools assets of people seeking similar investment objectives. By joining the "pool," these individuals own "shares" of the fund in proportion to the amount they invest. Each investor has a partial interest in each of the fund's underlying investments and shares in any potential profits. Professional money managers invest this pool of money in a variety of stocks, bonds or other securities that are consistent with the fund's stated objective, such as capital growth or tax-exempt income.

By investing in mutual funds, individuals enjoy a level of diversification and professional money management they may otherwise find difficult to achieve. Diversification, or owning a wide assortment of securities in various industries and companies, can help protect against large losses. That's because, even if some securities falter, others may perform well. In addition, the full-time professional management inherent in most mutual funds appeals to investors because many people lack the time, know-how or commitment to manage their own portfolio.

Usually, mutual funds are characterized by their investment objective. Growth funds offer capital appreciation potential by investing primarily in companies that are positioned for strong earnings growth. Because growth funds have a high degree of risk, they should be considered long-term investments. Income funds seek to provide more safety of principal and steady income by investing in companies with solid records of dividend payments. Investors who desire both current income and capital gains can invest in balanced funds. Specialty funds typically concentrate their holdings in a specific industry or geographic area.

The objective of a particular mutual fund often affects its risk level. Typically, the higher the return sought, the more risk a fund manager takes in the investments and thus, the more risk that is passed on to the investor. Potential returns on the more conservative funds may be lower than those of the more aggressive funds.

Investors can make money from mutual funds in basically three ways: dividend income, capital gain distributions and growth in capital. Dividend income payments are dividends and interest earned on the fund's investments. Capital gain distributions are payments made from any profits realized on the sale of securities held by the fund. Growth in capital occurs if the fund's underlying investments increase in value, and investors sell their fund shares at a price higher than the purchase price.

Of course, investors can lose money if the fund managers are not successful with their investments. There is no guarantee that investment objectives will be achieved. Also, it is important to realize that mutual funds are not federally

continued on page 16

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Knoebels Amusement Park Gay Day at 10th Anniversary

Saturday, August 14 marks the 10th anniversary of GAY DAY at Knoebels Amusement Park's Picnic Grounds.

GAY DAY began as a small gathering of friends from the Williamsport PA area. Now, the day long event draws 300 gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and transsexual individuals, friends, families, parents, children and young adults. "Guests from Washington, DC, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Pittsburgh find their way to Elysburg," says organizer Mike Escobar.

Each year the growing group spends the day visiting old friends, making new friends and riding the great amusement park rides offered on a "pay as you go" basis, especially appealing to families with kids. Knoebels Amusement Park has two classic roller coasters, each highly rated by amusement park enthusiasts worldwide.

Pavilion T-10 hosts the annual picnic. Registration begins at 11:00 a.m. All attendees are asked to bring a covered dish to share. Hot dogs and tableware will be provided. The covered dish lunch and raffles begin at 3:00 p.m. For more information:
mike.escobar@gtscompanies.com.

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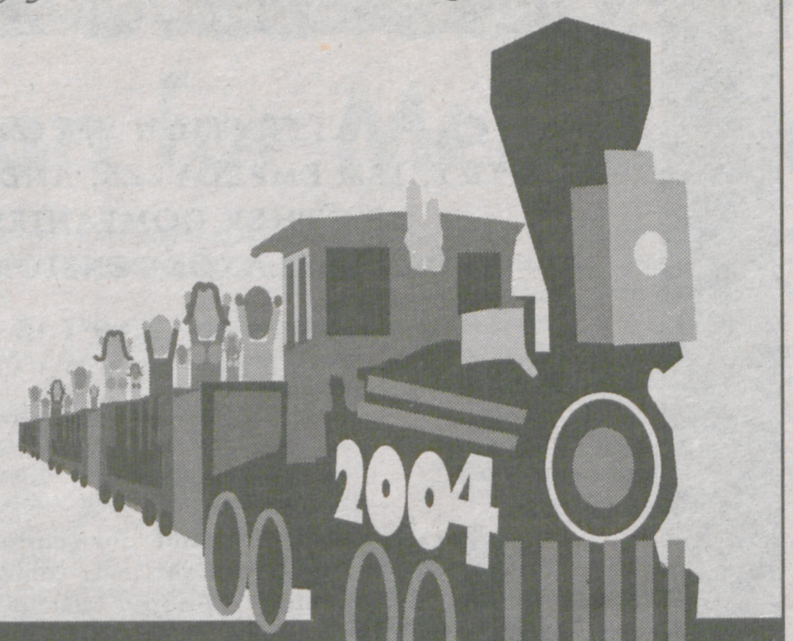

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Pennsylvania to Provincetown

Cape Cod's Bucolic Getaway Made Easy

By Winnie McCroy,
NYC Correspondent

When the hills of Central PA seem to be closing in on you, and the warm summer sun beckons you to the seaside, you know it's time to cash in that vacation time and head to the shore. You could wrestle the crowds of crying kids and drunken frat boys in Ocean City, or even sell your soul for a Fire Island timeshare. But for a vacation that's truly relaxing, in a place where you can express your true self, head to Provincetown.

Fly in direct on Cape Air, or make your way to Boston, then catch the 90-minute Bay State Cruise boat ride from Boston to Cape Cod. By the time you step onto the pier in Provincetown, the combination of sea air, ice-cold drinks and friendly camaraderie will put you in the mindset for vacation fun.

Check in at one of the many B&Bs, like the historic Fairbanks Inn on Bradford Street, or the tony Beacon Light Inn, which features one of the largest rooftop decks on the island. Don your cabana wear, and wend your way up and down Commercial Street, Provincetown's main drag, stopping at the many boutiques, art galleries, and stores catering to the thriving gay tourist industry. While tourists in other places may rush around, cramming in their sightseeing, in Provincetown, meandering is key. It is, after all, an island, and as one local quipped, no matter who or what you're looking for, eventually, you'll find it.

In this bustling resort town, the pace is perfect for biking. Rent a couple of beach cruisers and pedal through town, or if you're feeling adventurous, trek to Race Point on the West End. The sea birds and dune life will put you in a peaceful place.

Aspiring sailors, head to the pier, and hop on the Portuguese Princess for whale-watching. Cape Cod is a feeding ground for whales, which migrate every summer to its waters. The mammoth creatures approach the boats gracefully, as curious about its passengers as they are of them.

All this nature is liable to make you hungry. While local favorite The Lobster Pot is always a sure thing for ultra-fresh seafood and a beautiful harbor view, some newcomers have caused a stir. Stillwater's in the Gifford House Inn offers an upscale dining experience perfect for that special occasion. Start with classic seaside appetizers like Steely Shrimp, an ice cold shrimp cocktail in Stolichnaya sauce, or the succulent salmon ceviche, marinated in rice vinegar. Enjoy specialty entrees like the baked cod in paper, with a spicy Vietnamese fish sauce.

At night, this spot livens up, with a piano player in the front churning out standards and Sinatra, and a back bar bustling with revelers. In the basement, Club Purgatory dominates Sunday night.

Despite that last call in P-town comes at a conservative 1 a.m., visitors will find they can cram in quite a bit of fun in that time. Ladies will love the Pied Bar, or Vixen on Commercial. The A-House is a hotspot for gay men.

Get up and meet friends for a wasabi Bloody Mary at Esther's, a posh eatery/hotel with a lovely history, and a resident, namesake ghost. Sit on the outdoor patio and watch the parade of happy families, gay couples, and friendly locals.

In this cozy seaside town, suburban families mingle peacefully with leather daddies and softball dykes. And, since the same-sex marriage law went into effect on May 17, the streets are full of newly wed gay and lesbian couples. This situation has proven very profitable for the tourist industry.

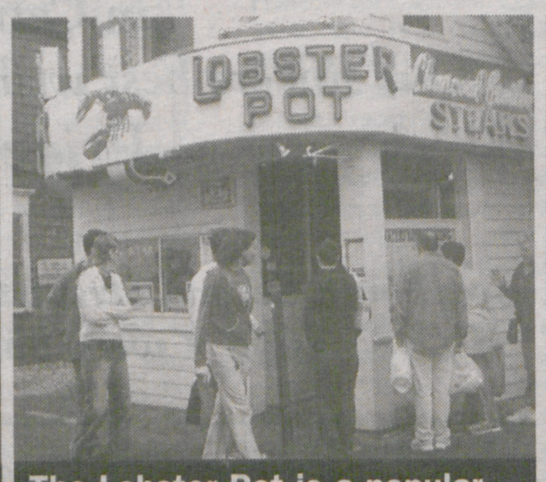
If you're feeling adventurous, trek up the hill to the Monument, a granite tower built in 1907 to commemorate the first landing of the Mayflower Pilgrims in 1620 (obviously, they kept looking). Walk the 252 feet to the top, and on a clear day, you can see to Boston. At the bottom, peruse the museum, and pick up souvenirs for the kids back home.

After a light lunch of sublime lobster bisque and delicious Black Angus burgers at Bayside Betsy's, head to the East End and check out the many art galleries. Ten-year resident artist John Clayton, who shows his work at William Scott Gallery, finds his harbor paintings popular among tourists looking to remember their visit.

After a glass of wine and a soak in the hot tub, have dinner at Central House Bar & Grille, one of the island's oldest hotels and eateries, dating back to the late 1880s. Treat yourself to the New England Lobster Roll, a local specialty, or the Crown Cioppino, a combination of scallops, shrimp, Cherrystone clams, red crab and cod simmered in a tomato broth. After, catch a drag or cabaret show next door, or work off dinner at Summer Camp, a mostly-men weekend dance party in the rear of the hotel. Don't be afraid to explore, barhopping from one venue to another. They're all relatively close. After a night of reveling, stop at Spiritus for a slice of pizza. This local favorite is one of the popular (and one of the only) late-night spots for snacking and socializing.

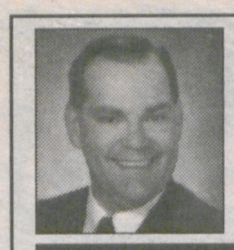
By Sunday, all you'll want to think about is grabbing some brunch on Bubbala's by the Bay outside patio, and perhaps indulging in a massage at one of the local salons. And what more is there to worry about?

The Beacon Light Inn provides upscale accommodations.



The Lobster Pot is a popular harborfront eatery.

The harbor at Provincetown is postcard-perfect.



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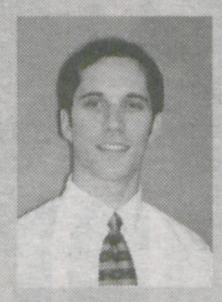

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Key West Great Summer Destination for Men & Women

by Chris Tittel
Key West Correspondent

Key West. Plain and simple, it's the best gay destination that you can book this summer. Flights are cheap during the off-season (through November). Room rates are the lowest that they'll be all year. Island breezes keep the temperatures much lower than those of other U.S. cities. Hordes of seasonal residents and visitors have returned north, leaving the streets, restaurants and bars to the locals.

Not to mention the fact that gays and lesbians have been flocking to Key West for decades, making it one of the most popular and laid back queer destinations that the world has to offer.

"Beyond the weather and the water, one of the secrets of Key West is the unobvious," Scott Fraser, executive director of the Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Key West, said. "We've assimilated so well into the community that we don't need to make obvious public statements about our sexuality."

"It's a very unusual community," Pearl's Rainbow Co-owner Heather Carruthers pointed out. "Gays and lesbians aren't ghettoized. We are part of the mainstream. Gay and straight intermingle. People arrive and ask where the gay community is located. I tell them: You're in it!"

Indeed, a stay on Key West might include the Gay & Lesbian Trolley Tour, a blue Q all-gay sailing and snorkeling adventure, a trip with Venus Charters all-female sea excursions, an afternoon on the Gay Trek walking tour of the island's gay history or a men-only sunset cruise courtesy of Sebago Key West.

For those less adventurous, of course, there's always the option of booking into a comfortable guesthouse, stripping down to your bathing trunks (or your birthday suit), plopping down in a chaise lounge poolside with a pitcher of margaritas and clearing your head while watching hard bronzed bodies walk past.

"Summertime is a wonderful time here," Islandhouse Owner Jon Allen said. "It's a wonderful time to just get naked and relax."

Alternative Central has profiled some of the more popular guesthouses on Key West. There are many more, of course. For fuller listings of gay-owned and -operated accommodations on Key West, visit www.fla-keys.com/gaykeywest.

Flights are cheap during the off-season (through November).

Beacon Boys

Lighthouse Court is one of the largest and best-known all-male, clothing-optional guesthouses on Key West. One reason it's so popular is location, merely steps from historic Key West lighthouse, Hemingway House and Duval Street. Wooden boardwalks and decks wind through the lush greenery to the hot tub, heated pool, video bar and health club. The Courtyard Café is billed as the best spot for brunch and man-watching on the island. Lighthouse Court offers standard and deluxe rooms, studios and suites and is pet-friendly. Off-season rates start at $70 per night.

"We're right in the middle of town, but we're secluded," Manager Tom Valego reassured. "And, we have a lot of return visitors. They get to be like family."

· ***Lighthouse Court: 902 Whitehead Street; 305-294-9588; www.lighthousecourt.com***

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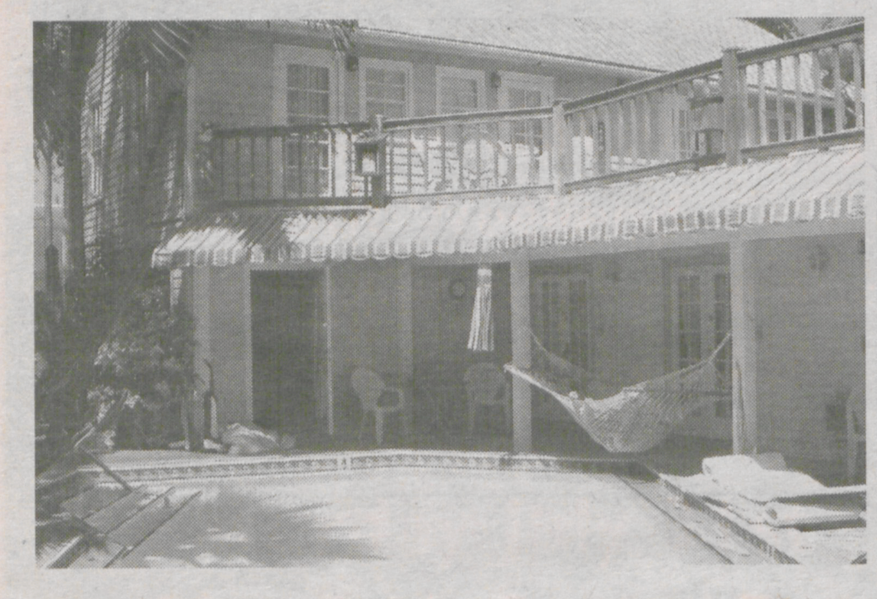

Long-Term Care for Gays and Lesbians

By Woody Derricks, Financial Advisor
Wachovia Securities
800-638-0626 ext. 9206

Whether you are single or in a committed relationship, it is hard enough to take care of the challenges of day-to-day living without having to worry about planning for the future. Despite your hectic life, may of you have taken the time necessary to plan for retirement and for your life insurance needs. Unfortunately, not enough people have taken the time to evaluate the need for long-term care.

Long-term care is the service provided by someone helping you manage your day to day routine. Typically this would occur if you could not perform several activities of daily living (commonly referred to as ADLs) on your own. These ADLs could include eating, dressing, bathing, toileting, or ambulating. Cognitive impairments such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's could also warrant long-term care. Those receiving this care could reside at home, an assisted living facility, or a nursing home.

Several factors affecting the population today make long-term care and the costs associated with this care a growing concern. According to a study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, approximately 40% of those aged 65 and over will need some form of long-term care during their lives. With AARP's estimates of nursing home costs averaging over $56,000 per year and stays lasting longer than 2? years, you can see the potential for your retirement assets to suffer greatly if you required nursing home care. Worse yet, the costs could escalate should you require in home or assisting living care prior to or after your stay in a nursing home.

To complicate matters, domestic partners have several disadvantages regarding long-term care not faced by a traditional married couple. The first disadvantage involves providers of care. Historically, children provide the first line of care when a parent requires assistance around the home or with the cost of a nursing home. Estimates by Medicare state that 70% of the care offered to the elderly community comes from family. Because the majority of gay and lesbian couples do not have children, they must plan on paying for their care.

Medicaid presents the GLBT community with several obstacles. In order to qualify for Medicaid, you must spend down the majority of your assets and turn over most of your income (including pension and Social Security income). If you were married, Medicaid would allow your spouse to stay at your home. Medicaid would also permit you to maintain additional investments (the greater of $18,552 in assets or half the couple's joint assets up to $92,760) and income (at least $1,515 per month and may allow $2,319 per month-amount varies by state) to provide for your spouse's day-to-day expenses. However, domestic partners are treated as two individuals. As two individuals, Medicaid will not exempt any of your income (including your pension) or investments to provide for your partner. Additionally, if you own your home jointly, Medicaid may require that sell your home. This could force your partner out on the street with minimal assets. As you can see, if you want to rely on Medicaid, you must take steps to protect your assets for your partner.

The other issue develops when both parties rely too heavily on the pension income received by one partner. Due to corporate and government reluctance to recognize gay and lesbian couples as beneficiaries on pension plans, many domestic partners find themselves in a difficult situation should the recipient of the pension pass away. In a previous article, "Pension Planning for Gays and Lesbians", I wrote that few companies will allow non-spousal beneficiaries on pension plans. This means that the person receiving the pension income cannot pass that income (or even a portion of it) to someone other than a spouse. If one person receives long-term care and the other has a pension plan and passes away, the survivor may have to receive Medicaid benefits to cover his/her nursing home costs. The reduction of income could even force the survivor to move from his/her home to a nursing home.

If you want to protect your assets, your income, and your right to choose your options for care, you may want to look into long-term care insurance. When shopping for long-term care insurance, make sure you compare "apples to apples." All too frequently policies proposed by insurance agents and group policies appear to cover all of your needs at a discounted rate. Insurance agents will often show you insurance estimates that include discounts for which you may or may not qualify. Group policies often provide reduced benefits to minimize their costs. I suggest finding a trustworthy advisor who can thoroughly explain your options. Your advisor should offer coverage through a reputable company, present proposals without health discounts (hopefully you will qualify for those later), and who can compare his/her policy against your other private and group policies. Most importantly, you should trust that this advisor will let you know if another company's policy is better for you.

Region's Renaissance Transgender Association Active

The mission of The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc. is to provide the very best comprehensive education and caring support to transgendered individuals and those close to them. The organization accomplishes its mission by offering a variety of carefully selected programs and resources focused on the factors affecting a transgendered person's life.

Renaissance sponsors local support groups where individuals can find safe space to learn about transgender behavior. At present, there are 11 Chapters around the country. The Renaissance philosophy is open, non-discriminatory membership for everyone.

The group also publishes a monthly magazine, *Transgender Community News,* that provides an open forum for discussion of gender-related social, political and legal issues, as well as basic information about events within the transgender community. An annual subscription is $30. Most chapters and affiliates also publish local newsletters.

Renaissance also provides a series of papers with basic information on a variety of transgender topics. Our *Background Papers* provide basic information on TG issues.

The group's *Community Outreach Bulletins* give useful information on how to start and run a local support group. If you are interested in starting a local group read Outreach Bulletin #1 and contact the Executive Director. Renaissance operates a Speakers Bureau through its Outreach Program Office. Trained speakers are available for college, university and media venues.

Renaissance provides a connection to resources for female to male transgendered people. Click here for female to male information. The group presented the 4th International Congress on Crossdressing, Sex & Gender in October of 2000. Visit the Congress Page for more information. For information: www.ren.org.

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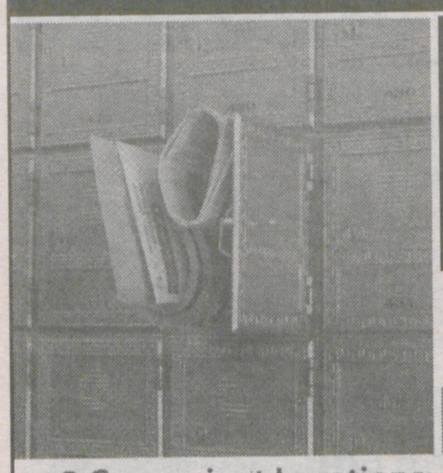

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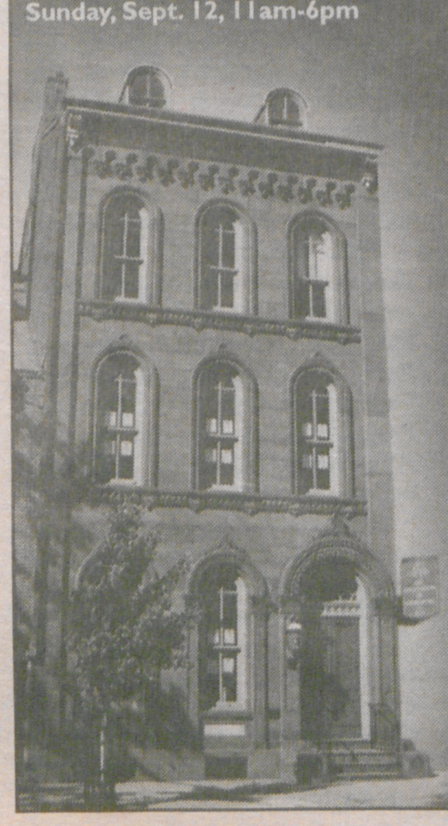

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Lesbian Notions on Health Insurance

by Paula Martinac

There are 44 million Americans without health insurance - a number that includes many lesbians and gay men. According to a survey by Harris Interactive and Witeck-Combs Communications, almost a third of us don't have health insurance, making coverage a vital issue for gay people.

Why such a high percentage? Despite the marketing surveys that suggest gay people are all affluent with high-paying jobs, there are plenty of us who are poor or whose small-business employers don't provide health insurance. Especially at risk are the young and old and those who are vulnerable to firing because of their gender expression.

Also, many of us have chosen self-employment, which eliminates the fear of workplace discrimination. But in my 10 years as a freelance writer and editor, I've had lean times when I couldn't afford coverage and had to gamble that I'd stay healthy. And even when I "could" afford it, I discovered that big insurance companies use various trumped-up excuses (all legal) to deny coverage to healthy self-employed people or to charge exorbitant rates for minimal individual policies with high deductibles.

In addition, gay people may be especially vulnerable simply because of how health coverage works in this country. Think about it: employment and marital status - two areas in which we don't yet enjoy equal rights - are the main avenues to obtaining health insu ance. In fact, those have been the two primary paths to health insurance since the ultraconservative post-World War II era. Employer-supplied health insurance was born of corporate need: with a shortage of labor after the war, businesses had to find a way to lure and keep good employees. So the government helped out by granting tax incentives to employers who provided health insurance to their workforce - which proved to be an appealing, tax-free benefit for employees.

It was a system that worked fairly well back then, the only time in our history when the "traditional" family of breadwinner father, stay-at-home mother, and biological offspring was in a majority. But 50 years later, society and the economy have changed significantly, and now medical and insurance costs are hideously bloated - yet health coverage is still being meted out as if only the gainfully employed and their government-recognized dependents deserve it.

This has created a huge crisis in health insurance, with many middle-class citizens now just a pink slip or a divorce decree away from being uninsured and unable to afford their own coverage - until they can find another full-time job or remarry someone who has insurance. So much for the idea that marriage rights alone - or even domestic partnership - will solve our community's health-care problems.

What's more, the number of uninsured is bound to increase as professional jobs continue to be outsourced abroad. Consider this: according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the past year white-collar temps like engineers and computer technicians have accounted for nearly one-third of the total increase in employment numbers - and temps, of course, don't get health insurance. Being uninsured, at least for periods of time, is fast becoming a middle-class phenomenon.

As anyone who's ever been uninsured can attest, what's scary is not just the enormous risk involved - a single hospitalization could wipe you out financially - but also the long-term impact on your health if you don't get quality preventive care and you have to rely on emergency rooms and free clinics. It's been suggested, for example, that the increased incidence of breast cancer in lesbians may be connected to their not having health insurance; because medical care is so expensive, uninsured lesbians may wait to see a doctor or to have screening mammograms until their cancer is too advanced to treat.

The ideal solution would be health insurance that didn't depend on status - Americans would be guaranteed universal coverage in a sort of extended Medicare system, simply because good, affordable health care is a right, not a privilege. (Check out the many excellent sources on universal health coverage provided by the American Medical Student Association at amsa.org.)

In fact, a majority of Americans indicate that they "want" universal coverage and would pay extra taxes to have it. But the issue has been debated in Washington for decades - and repeatedly dismissed - because the medical and insurance industries are too wealthy and powerful, and the uninsured too scattered to have any clout.

And sadly, few civil rights groups see health insurance as an issue that's directly connected to their struggles. Gay groups in particular are noticeably absent from the list of organizations backing "Cover the Uninsured Week" (covertheuninsured.org). In the coming week, gay people should make time to become aware of how health insurance affects us in particular and what we as a community might do in coalition with others affected by this growing crisis.

Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of eight books and editor in chief of Q Syndicate. She can be reached care of this publication or at LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com.

Sex and the Trash Talk About It

by Ric Kasini Kadour
Men's Health Correspondent

Everyone from public health officials to conservative church leaders weigh in on gay sex and health. Usually the conclusion is that gay sex will somehow lead to the obliteration of America.

For example, in March, the Family Research Council (FRC) issued a statement which reported, "Health officials are 'troubled' with the findings of the 2004 National STD Prevention Conference in Philadelphia that show homosexual and bisexual men and adolescents seem to be ignoring safe-sex messages." The FRC went on to conclude, "Hard-working, healthy families will be the ones to suffer since prices [of health coverage] will skyrocket and families will be forced to drop their health insurance."

In February, a Gay.com UK article reported that oral sex causes cancer. The reporter in that instance mis-paraphrased another article that reported on a French study which found that the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) can be transmitted orally (a fact we already knew) and that HPV can cause cancer (another fact we already knew).

Also in March, the National Coalition of STD Directors issued a statement that, "the Internet is exacerbating the spread of STDs such as syphilis among men who have sex with men." What I would like to know is, If I increase the speed of my dial-up connection, am I more likely to contract syphilis?

I wonder about the ratio of positive sex stories to negative sex stories. When do we see the study that says: Researchers Confirm Sex Brings Pleasure to Millions or Happiness Found in Those with Multiple Partners. When is it reported, Anal Sex between Two HIV Negative Men Does Not Cause AIDS.

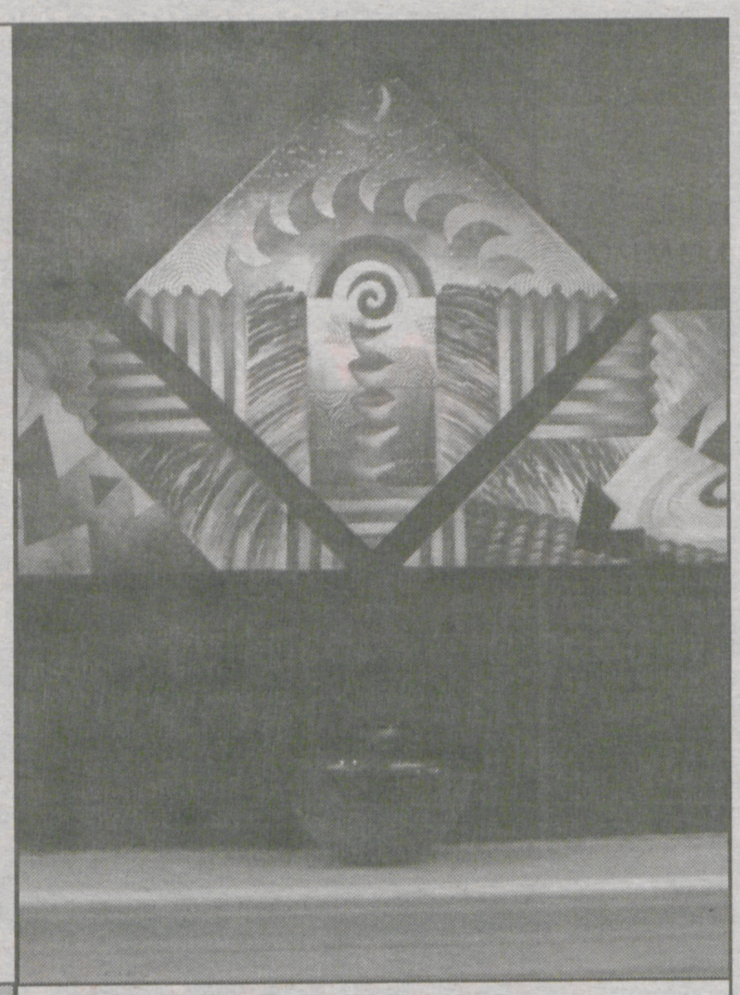
Don't get me wrong. Gay men's sexual health is an important issue. Nationally rates of syphilis have steadily increased since 2000; a reversal of trends from the 1990's when America was on the verge of eliminating syphilis. Rates of HIV and gonorrhea transmission are also increasing among gay men. It is good that sexual health information is getting out there.

But there are consequences to presenting health information in this manner. The biggest challenge health educators face is overcoming the fatigue gay men have for sexual health information. Gay men's knowledge of health, particularly around sex, is diminished, not enhanced, when good information is lost in a sea of tabloid-inspired verbiage.

The problem of health information fatigue and confusion is compounded when men are forced to constantly negotiate shame and fact. Some of us want to believe our sex is inherently good; some of us want to believe our sex is inherently bad. Too often health information is presented in such a way as to reinforce beliefs that sex is bad: "that the sin of the flesh leads only to disease and despair."

The bottom line is that gay men need good, reliable information about sex. More importantly, we need good sex education and the only way to get it is to do it ourselves. Trash reporting about sex and official statements which distort information only exacerbates the problem.

Ric Kasini Kadour is former Program Director for Seattle's Gay City Health Project and former coordinator of Vermont's Men's Health Project. He lives and works as a freelance writer and consultant in Vermont. ric@kasinihouse.com



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News Page continued

the perpetrators of the alleged Iraq prison-based abuse are homosexuals, blaming the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Why are queers responsible? Many people believe that homosexuals have a much greater potential than heterosexuals to be sexual predators, according to MensNewsDaily.com.

Virginia is for lovers. Some restrictions apply.

Gay activists in Virginia are toying with a new motto for the state: "Virginia is for lovers. Some restrictions apply." They are angry and even threatening to leave the state over a new law that will prohibit civil unions and could interfere with contracts between same-sex couples.

Two groups have formed to convince lgbt travelers to boycott Virginia over the new law. VirginiaisforHaters.org is the brainchild of Jay Porter and his partner David Smith. The second group, Make Love Legal, will target the 400th anniversary celebration of the founding of Jamestown scheduled for 2007.

"I won't buy a home in Virginia. I'm done," said Bo Shuff, a 30-year-old gay rights activist who has rented in the Washington, D.C., suburb of Arlington for the last two years. Added Edna Johnston, a lesbian who has scuttled plans to move her historic preservation consulting business from Washington to northern Virginia: "It's not a signal, it's a message: 'You're not welcome.'"

The new law is an amendment to the state's 1997 Affirmation of Marriage Act, which prohibits gay marriages in Virginia. The amendment extends that ban to civil unions, partnership contracts and other "arrangements between persons of the same sex purporting to bestow the privileges or obligations of marriage."

Two groups have formed to convince LGBT travelers to boycott the state of Virginia following the passage of a law banning gay marriage, civil unions and all other same-sex partnerships.

The law is considered the most repressive legislation in the country for gay couples and their children. A website is calling on people not only to boycott Virginia as a tourist destination but also to pass up products made in the state.

VirginiaisforHaters.org is the brainchild of Jay Porter and his partner David Smith who live in Seattle. The website name plays on the state's tourism motto, "Virginia is for Lovers." Porter says the state law is of concern for all Americans.

He points to clothing company J.Crew which markets across the country but has a customer service and distribution center in Lynchburg, Va.

The second group is specifically targeting the 400th anniversary celebration of the founding of Jamestown in 2007. Virginia is expecting millions of visitors for the yearlong event.

Make Love Legal says it hopes to put a dent in the billions of dollars the state stands to bring in as a result of the celebration.

"This whole idea is: Don't spend your money in a place where people hurt you," Diane Horvath, the Richmond attorney who is behind Make Love told the Pilot newspaper.

Virginia already had a so-called Defense of Marriage law when the new bill arrived on the desk of Gov. Mark R. Warner. Attempts by Warner were rebuffed by the legislature, and in April the original act was passed a second time leaving the governor no choice but to sign it. (story)

Virginia's leading gay rights organization, Equality Virginia, is planning a legal challenge, as well as statewide protests on June 30, the day before the law takes effect.

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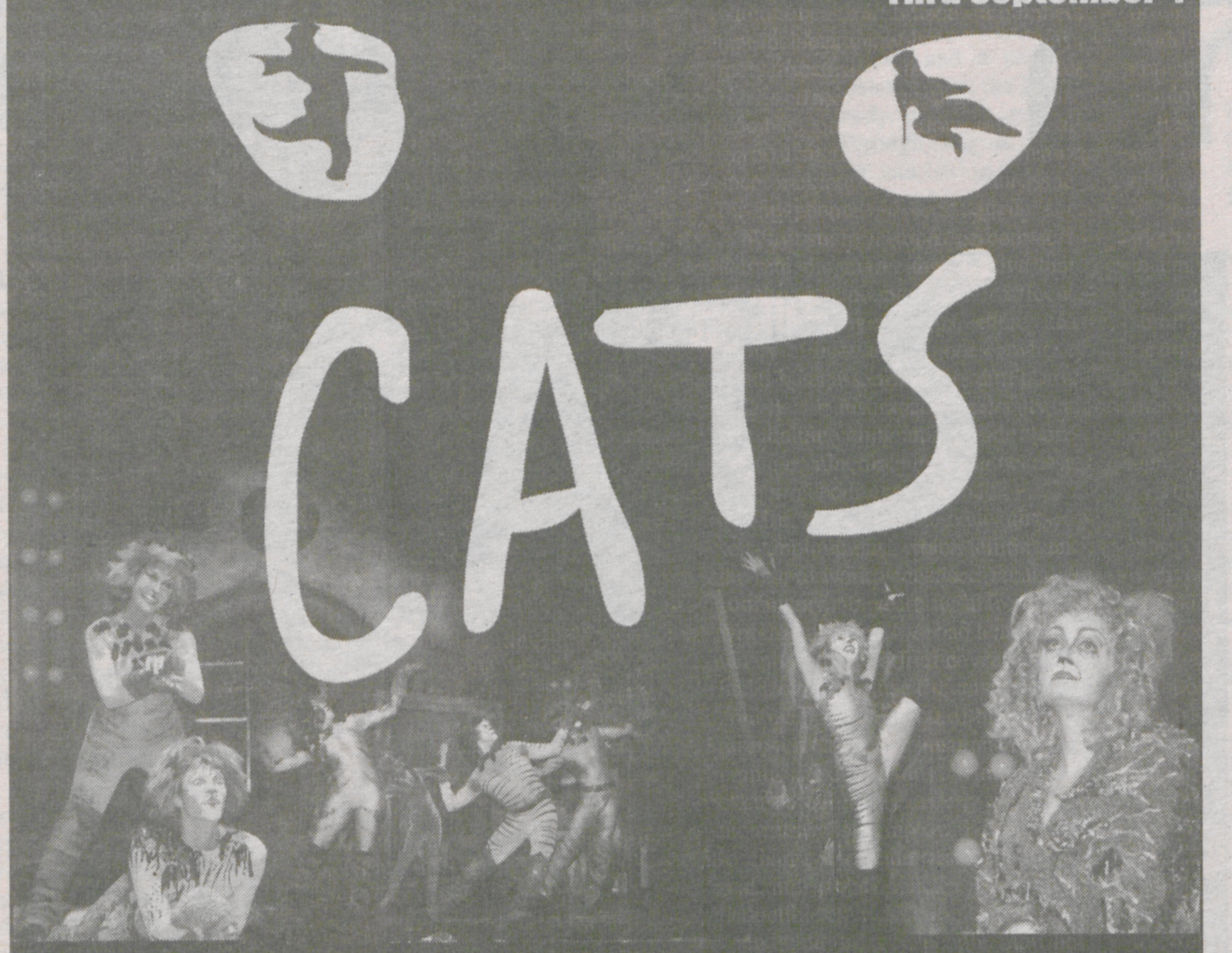
Let The Memory Live Again!

Thru September 4



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Calendar of Events

JULY

2nd - Friday - 7 PM to 9 PM - Gay.com Pre-Party
4th & 5th - Holiday - Special Hours - WE ARE OPEN - Noon to 8 PM
7th - Wednesday - 7 PM to 9 PM - Men's Discussion Group
11th - Sunday - 4 PM to 6 PM - Women's Book Club Meeting
17th – Saturday - 8 PM to 10 PM - Queer As Folk Party
21st – Wednesday - 7 PM to 9 PM - Men's Discussion Group
31st - Saturday - 11:30 AM to 7 PM - Harrisburg's Pride
9 PM to 2 AM - Promotion table at Stallion's

AUGUST

4th – Wednesday - 7 PM to 9 PM - Men's Discussion Group
6th – Friday - 7 PM to 9 PM - Gay.com Pre-Party
7th – Saturday - 1 PM to 4 PM - Tastefully Simply Party
4 PM to 8 PM - Sci-Fi Author, Jim Moon
8 PM to 10 PM - Queer As Folk Party
8th – Sunday - 4 PM to 6 PM - Women's Book Club Meeting
18th – Wednesday - 7 PM to 9 PM - Men's Discussion Group
21st – Saturday - 8 PM to 10 PM - Queer As Folk Party

Check our website for an up-to-date Calendar of Events

Check Us Out

41 North Front Street
Steelton, PA 17113
717-939-5507

www.foreverbooks.biz

BOOK Review

Information provided by Forever Books, 41 N. Front Street, Steelton (939-5507), Central PA's only gay & lesbian bookstore.

Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity

by Chloë Brushwood Rose(Editor), Anna Camilleri (Editor)

Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity is a manifesto for the unrepentant bitch, straddling the furious and fantastic. This sharp-edged collection (of fiction, prose poetry, personal essay, photographs, and illustration) figures the un-hyphenated femme experience emerging in performance, betrayal, violence, humor and survival.

Whether by choice or necessity, these frenzied femmes each explore their desires to make (and remake) femininity fit their own queer frames. Darling, drag queens, and action heroes... a femme by any other name is spectacular.

Suares, Triangles, and Saucer

by Jim Moon

Jason Deering comes from a loving but dysfunctional family. In his youth, he finds himself bullied by his schoolmates. No one except a motley group of hippies, and one special girl, accept Jason at face value. He soon strikes out on his own, only to form a business relationship with Russel Tazian, a heartless, unscrupulous man with designs on Jason's bank account. Unable to pay his debts to Tazian, Jason flees for his life. He discovers strange destinations far away from his familiar rural Pennsylvania surroundings, complete with bizarre cast of characters.

P-Town Summer

by Lisa Stocker

Provincetown. An oasis of lazy days, ocean air, and frosty summer drinks — the perfect place to relax and bond while soaking up the summer sun. At least, that's the plan when long-time couple Claire and Rita initiate newbies Kit and Sabi to the pleasure of Provincetown. But from the first flat tire to the constant delays (can anyone say "hold it in?") on the road to the Cape, it's clear that this is one ride that will be anything but smooth. In fact, its downright insane — a crazy trip filled with drama and traumas, dance cruises, sugar mamas, dangerous flirtations, forbidden fantasies, jewelry lust, and the occasional bad line dance. And that's not all...

Found Tribe: Jewish Coming Out Stories

by Lawrence Schimel (Editor)

Found tribe is a collection of intimate essays by and gay Jewish men on the experiences of coming out as gay within a Jewish context or as Jewish within a gay context. No longer necessarily lost or excluded, today's gay Jews tell their courageous, powerful stories of finding and embracing their religious and sexual identities that enrich both the Jewish and gay experience.

Theatre Roundup

Erica Carl First Paid Employee of Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg

The 53-year-old Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg (LTM) hired its first paid employee in March. Erica Carl, a volunteer at the community theater since 1991, resigned as the board president and will now serve as the administrative director.

Hiring a full-time director was an important step in the theater's growth, which still relies on volunteers for its actors and technical and production staffs. "The organization has grown so much under volunteer leadership, but we've moved into things volunteers cannot accomplish as easily," said LTM Treasurer Dona Norris. "It was a natural progression, the next step for the organization."

Carl has volunteered on the LTM board since 1991, eventually becoming board president in 1998. She also worked behind the scenes in more than 80 of the theater's productions; her roles included stage manager, director, producer and dresser.

As a volunteer, Carl strove to promote LTM's mission to produce high-quality theatrical productions for its audiences' enjoyment, while simultaneously fostering the artistic and creative skills of its volunteers. She says her passion remains the same in her new position. "We want everyone — from rookie to veteran audience member or volunteer — to experience exceptional community theatre," Carl said. "That's what sets LTM apart from most theatres — that, and our intimate, 64-seat space."

Her plans as director will include seeking new fundraising opportunities and community outreach efforts.

Carl has a B.A. in English from Penn State Harrisburg and an associate's degree in secondary education/communication arts. Her other theater experience includes production director for a number of Pennsylvania Youth Music Theatre productions at the Carlisle Regional Performing Arts Center.

For more information, go to www.ltmonline.net.

Totem Pole Playhouse Opens 54th Season

The curtain is up on the 54th season at Totem Pole Playhouse, South Central Pennsylvania's leading professional summer theatre. Located half way between Gettysburg and Chambersburg, Caledonia Theatre Company and a series of guest sponsors present the 2004 season of comedy, suspense and music.

Through August 29th, theatregoers can sit in air conditioned comfort and enjoy an afternoon or evening of high quality professional entertainment beneath the pines of beautiful Caledonia State Park.

The 2004 Totem Pole Playhouse season includes:

Weekend Comedy by Jeanne & Sam Bobrick (June 22 – July 4): A Contemporary Situation Comedy starring Wil Love. Sponsored by Jennings Chevrolet-Oldsmobile-Cadillac

Night Watch by Lucille Fletcher (July 6 – 18): A Suspenseful Broadway Thriller. Sponsored by Davies Insurance Agency, Inc.

Father Of The Bride by Caroline Francke based on the novel by Edward Streeter (July 20 – August 1): An American Family Comedy. Sponsored by F&M Trust.

Crimes Of The Heart by Beth Henley (August 3 – 15): Pulitzer Prize Winning Comedy. Sponsored by BarleySnyder Attorneys at Law.

Tintypes Conceived by Mary Kyte with Mel Marvin and Gary Pearle (August 17 – 29): Joyous Family Musical. Sponsored by Patriot Federal Credit Union.

The summer's activities are not confined to the six main stage productions. *Dinner At Totem Pole* will again be served every Wednesday and Thursday at 6:30 PM in the Picnic Pavillion on the West Lawn. Reservations are required.

The popular *Getting To Know You Post* Show Discussions provide theatre patrons an opportunity to meet actors and staff members following certain performances of each production. This year's discussions are scheduled as follows:

Night Watch: Friday evening, July 9th.

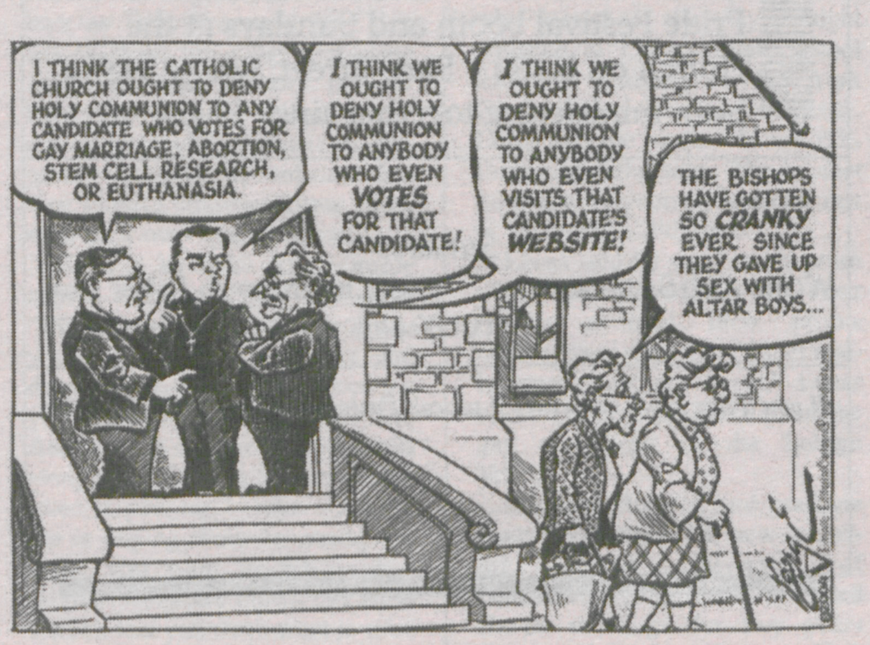
Father Of The Bride: Wednesday evening, July 28th.

Crimes Of The Heart: Thursday evening, August 12th.

Tintypes: Friday evening, August 27th.

And one of the busiest organizations at the theatre continues to be the *Friends Of Totem Pole Playhouse,* a volunteer support group that provides many vital services including ushering, meeting incoming actors, greeting bus groups and planning the annual Playhouse picnic. All talents and interests are needed and welcome.

For information on all Caledonia Theatre Company and Totem Pole Playhouse events including group sales, special theatre party rates, money-saving subscription plans and special student discount rates, simply stop by the box office or call 717-352-2164 or 1-888-805-7056. The Playhouse fax number is: 717-352-8870 and the email address is boxoffice@totempoleplayhouse.org. Keep up to date by visiting the Web Site at www.totempoleplayhouse.org.


I THINK THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OUGHT TO DENY HOLY COMMUNION TO ANY CANDIDATE WHO VOTES FOR GAY MARRIAGE, ABORTION, STEM CELL RESEARCH, OR EUTHANASIA.
I THINK WE OUGHT TO DENY HOLY COMMUNION TO ANYBODY WHO EVEN VOTES FOR THAT CANDIDATE!
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THE BISHOPS HAVE GOTTEN SO CRANKY EVER SINCE THEY GAVE UP SEX WITH ALTAR BOYS...

Forever Books Region's Only LGBT Bookstore

Forever Books is the only lgbt bookstore in the Harrisburg region. They now have a new business partner. Although specializing in lgbt related books, magazines and gifts, visitors to the store will also find various cultural-related items.

The store was originally opened in October 2003 by partners Tameca Waid and Monique Pearson. During the first year, their focus was to establish a base inventory of books and merchandise, a Women's Book Club and to market their new business. During the past nine months, these goals have been successfully accomplished. The store has done quite well.

In April 2004, Forever Books participated in the Cultural Diversity Fair at Millersville University. During this event, a volunteer helping Forever Books began discussions with the two co-owners, expressing an interest in becoming an additional business partner. In May, Mark Lemkelde, a local corporate executive in Information Technology, was officially added as the newest co-owner and member of the Forever Books family.

During May 2004, the business focus of Forever Books was

continued on page 18

MOVIE REVIEW

Gay Indy Film Themes Vibrant • Reviewed by Kevyn Knox
www.thecinematheque.com

YOSSI & JAGGER

2002, Eytan Fox, Israel
A favorite at last year's Gay & Lesbian Film Festival in Harrisburg's Midtown Cinema (scheduled this year for October 1-7), this is a beautifully done love story between two soldiers in the Israeli Army. Electrically charged camera work, all done with a hand-held camera, manages to bring the drama right into your face, and right into these lover's faces as well. There is one scene, the "big" love scene, which represents one of the most tender moments ever caught on film – while they make love war rages all around these two men, a war that will inevitably either rip their love apart or make it even stronger than ever before.

THE BITTER TEARS OF PETRA VON KANT

1972, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Germany
The master of the uber-male homo-erotic melodrama, with "Bitter Tears" turns around to give us an intertwining story of women in love (and lust) and the power one woman holds over another. With a camera that twists about the set like a snake charmer seducing his prey, this film is a classically spectacular work of cinema. Everything from the elaborately ornate set decoration to the haunting musical score makes this Fassbinder's greatest work of art.

PARAGRAPH 175

1999, Rob Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman, UK/Germany/US
Everyone always hears of the Jewish genocide that was the Holocaust, but hidden beneath that event is another persecution: that of the Homosexual of Europe. Dressed in their pink triangles (yes, it was Hitler who gave us that symbol), gay men and women of Europe are rounded up and sent to concentration camps. This documentary delves into the Nazi's Paragraph 175 proclamation and brings forth sad, bitter tales of what happened in Europe in the 30's and 40's to the Homosexual. The film is both exhausting and enrapturing.

JEFFREY

(1995, Christopher Ashley, US): Funny. Sad. Tender. Bawdy. Touchi ng. Erotic. Sobering. Funny. Who ever thought, while watching *Wings* on TV, that Steven Weber could have this range as an actor?
A film with all the touches that a romantic comedy should have, without any of those over-sentimental clichés (okay, there are some clichés, but here they're funny as hell). A film that any self-respecting gay man can't do without seeing. Funny. Sobering. Erotic. Touching. Bawdy. Tender. Sad.

Diva Pepper continued

creativity through her music. As a vocalist, electric and acoustic guitarist and lyricist, she has written and delivered an array of powerful, personal, yet universal songs.

What makes Natalie's music so electrifying is her pop rock, electronica and blues style and blend of acoustic and electric sounds. Her heart pounding rhythms, exuberant melodies and captivating words are a true mark of her ability to harness the rawness of life.

The Voodoo Lovehounds

The Voodoo Lovehounds is a four piece Blues/R&B band with some Soul and Funk thrown into the mix. A little different than your typical blues band – covering traditional blues and covers that you may not think of as Blues. They like what they do, have a good time doing it, and you will, too.

Central PA Pride Schedule of Events

12:00 – 12:10 p.m.
Star Spangled Banner
Pride Committee
Opening Remarks
12:10 p.m. – 12:25 p.m.
MCC of the Spirit Choir
12:25 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.
Commitment Ceremony
12:55 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Musical Tribute to Couples
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Drag Performers featuring Glenda & Friends
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Natalie Darkes
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Drag Performers featuring Glenda & Friends
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Voodoo Lovehounds
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Drag Performers featuring Glenda & Friends
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Pepper MaShay – International Dance Diva

Patricia Nell Warren continued

the successful demolition of the Texas sodomy laws, you warn people about complacency.

Patricia Nell Warren: *Right now, many Americans are complacent, in the sense that they're not worried about the current erosion of civil rights. And many lgbt people have drifted into complacency as well. After the recent Supreme Court victory on sodomy, activists rejoiced, but our general population seemed to have a more ho-hum attitude about it. In San Francisco only a few hundred people turned out to celebrate— a city where you'd expect thousands dancing in the streets. It's easy to focus on what we've won— easy to forget about the danger of what we could lose. Plus many of us are focused on maintaining economically— dealing with debt, paying bills, keeping jobs, etc. Many of my young L.A. friends in their 20s are out of work right now, so activism by equating it with domestic terrorism.*

Gay people definitely need a new model of activism for the new millennium - one that is effective but that doesn't put activists at risk of a felony conviction on their first arrest. We also don't want to go the route of other activist fronts who have chosen the non-peaceful route to achieve their goals.

AR: What do you think of the latest AIDS activism?

PNW: *In the AIDS arena, I am shocked to see a widespread lack of institutional accountability, whether it's accounting for how much of AIDS fundraising actually reaches sick people, or whether it's honesty about how effective some prevention programs really are.*

And there is widespread AIDS apathy. It isn't just an attitude that "AIDS is over." Many gay people seem to think that we still enjoy a lot of power and leverage in U.S. AIDS policy. They don't track current events, so they don't see that the high ground we seized in the 1980s is now being eroded by right-wing influence in the government. Even the CDC is under the religious right's thumb, proven by the agency's recent decision to advocate abstinence. Many people with AIDS don't rock the boat because they're afraid of social ostracism, possibly even denial of services by their local ASO. This, too, is something I've learned from traveling a lot and talking to people.

I've written about how pharmaceutical research is possibly being skewed by conflict of interest, and how the "global war on AIDS" is being politicized by big business and big religion. I've also asked questions about how many people with AIDS died homeless when HOPWA funds went massively unspent in big cities across the country? But most of the GLBT media are not interested in these subjects. Not many writers, other than Wayne Turner and Patrick Monette-Shaw and a few others, want to question or investigate anything in what has become the "conventional AIDS wisdom." Few editors want to rock the boat. Last year I got an email from a prominent gay editor who had read my most recent A & U piece and said, "I wish I'd published it." I emailed back and said, "Assign me to write something like that for you, and I will." He never responded.

***

Part Two of Warren's interview will appear in the next issue when she talks about those who have tried to silence her controversial views on helping queer youth and her thoughts on the lack of true unity in the gay community.

Alexander Renault is the pen name for a writer who has published in multiple genres. Mr. Renault is editor of the non-fiction anthology Walking Higher: Gay Men Write About the Deaths of Their Mothers. www.AlexanderRenault.com.

2004.2005 SEASON

The Threepenny Opera
by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill
September 17 – October 10, 2004
The classic Kurt Weill musical featuring "The Ballad of Mack the Knife". Business has never been dirtier ...!

Proof
by David Auburn
October 29 – November 21, 2004
The 2001 Pulitzer Prize and Tony-winner
Romantic, funny, mysterious and intelligent. A young woman learns how much of her father's madness–or genius–she will inherit.

Yellowman
by Dael Orlandersmith
February 4 – 27, 2005
Two star-crossed lovers cling to each other passionately and provocatively across an unusual race divide.

Harper Lee's
To Kill a Mockingbird
dramatized by Christopher Sergel
April 15 – May 8, 2005
An American classic and a genuine work of storytelling art. The timeless tale of justice for all.
sponsored by Pennsylvania State Education Association

6th Annual
Womenspeak Festival
June 2 – 25, 2005
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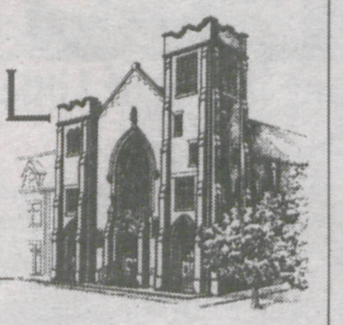

We welcome all people, including our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender sisters and brothers. Come get to know us at our Pride Festival booth and Sundays at the church on historic State Street, where we've been ministering together since 1906.

Sundays
WORD AND SACRAMENT 9:00 a.m. through Labor Day
(10:00 a.m. starting September 7)

If you'd like to ask questions of us, call Pastor Mueller at 717.234.0092.

FAB Funds Community Projects

The Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center will again host The Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg's Fall Achievement & Benefit Fundraiser known as FAB on November 20 for its annual awards gala, according to Marc-Carroll Rigel, event chairperson.

The annual event offers food, entertainment, music, and a silent auction. The ticket price of $75 and $135 dollars covers the actual cost of the event. The proceeds from the program advertising and the silent auction portion of the evening have supported a long list of worthy lgbt projects. "FAB uses all the money raised from the silent auction and the ads to support lgbt projects and has given away $118,000 since 1996," Rigel says.

In recent years, FAB has served as the fundraising arm of The Greater Harrisburg Foundation's Equity for Gays and Lesbian Partnership (EGAL) Fund, affiliated with the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership.

The FAB 2004 Committee consists of Jennifer Ellis, Peggy Lichty, Sue McDonald, Christina Persson, Carol Reisinger, Marc-Caroll Rigel, Kiz Smith, Luci Stone, Jennifer Storm, and Jeff Welshans.

Rigel told *Alternative Central* that the event "is a unique way to contribute to the lgbt community and have fun". The event features local and nationally known visual artists in a silent auction. He also notes that the as the regional com-

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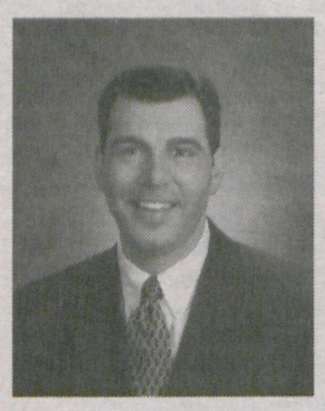

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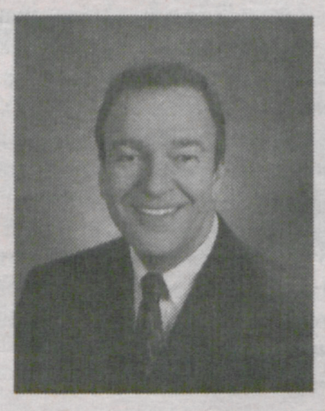

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, inc. Alternative CENTRAL

START your membership and subscription

The Switchboard is always looking for help with its programs. It takes money and volunteers to operate the Switchboard. If you would like to help by volunteering to serve on the phone line, helping financially through membership or a donation, give us a call or write GLSH and use the attached form. Thank you for your help.

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◯ $20 Member ◯ $25 Couple ◯ $35 Sustainer ◯ $50 Patron
◯ $100 Benefactor ◯ $250 Underwriter ◯ Donation_____

Membership includes one year subscription of "Alternaive Central." Mailed in an unmarked first class sealed envelope. Make check payable to GLSH. Mail to GLSH, 1300A North Third Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102

I am interested in volunteering for:_____the telephone line_____committees/projects

___Please send me information about listing my business/organization with the Switchboard

Please return this form with payment. GLSH is a 501(c) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

717.234.0328

FAB continued

munity evolves, FAB hopes to support new and exciting projects. "Our community is telling us they want a variety of activities, choices. We agree, but we need the community's financial support to make these new ideas happen such as a brick and mortar community center," Rigel says.

Mutual Fund Investing continued

insured (even if sold through a bank), although certain types of funds invest in securities that are insured. Based on the fund's investment objective, other more specific risks may arise. Funds that concentrate their holdings in a specific industry, or sector funds, can be vulnerable to any single economic, political, or regulatory development. Funds concentrating their holdings in a certain geographic area, or international funds, can be vulnerable to currency exchange fluctuation, different government regulations, economic conditions, and accounting standards.

Before investing in any mutual fund, consider your goals, risk profile and investment time horizon. Then select a fund that matches your objectives. Ask for the fund's prospectus and read it carefully before investing. Mutual funds are offered through AXA Advisors, LLC.

Benn Smith offers securities through AXA Advisors, LLC (member NASD, SIPC) 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104 and offers annuity and insurance products through an insurance brokerage affiliate, AXA Network, LLC, and its subsidiaries. He may be reached in his Harrisburg office at 717-540-1404 x7003.

DJ Barry B's World of Music

Let me first start by introducing myself to you. My name is Barry Hackman. Most of the local nightclub and bar patrons might know me as DJ Barry B. I have been the resident DJ of Stallions Entertainment Complex for almost fifteen years.

I have also worked in management and ordering for a local music store chain for three and half years. So music is my life. Or at least you can say a big part of it.

I will give you an overview of the music around us from issue to issue.

Let's start off this column with a few names everyone is familiar with these days. Madonna, Britney, Beyonce, and Janet are all back with hits - all at the same time. Madonna with her album "American Life" is still sending out song after song. Although she is up to her fifth club dance mix her singles just aren't hitting radio around this area. Some of the songs on the album got a bit of a push with the dance mixes being played in clubs. Madonna is at that point where she doesn't have to worry if her songs are commercial enough to sell or get radio play. She has her following and will continue to add to it everyday.

"In The Zone" is the current album from Britney Spears. Britney never takes a break. She keeps pumping out her pop tunes. Every song she releases is an instant radio and club hit.

Janet Jackson with her new album "Damita Jo" might just be the biggest surprise. Janet's new album contains 22 tracks. The first single "Just A Little While" was a great song to bring her back into the mainstream after a long break. It did well on radio and was a good club hit. Janet's second song released shows that she can be a little more creative. The song has a very different kind of sound and the vocal is bit different. There will be many more hits to follow with the return of Janet and her new cd.

A favorite of mine is Beyonce Knowles with her album "Dangerously in Love." This talented artist first started off with the group Destiny's Child. Hit singles and hit dance mixes with the group only got her charged up for her solo career. The album ranges from catchy songs you will sing all day to songs that you can make out to all night long.

Lets go across the seas now to find some good dance music you shouldn't miss out on. First from Italy is the group In-Grid with their album "Rendezvous." The first hit was released over seas in French. The song "Tu Es Foute" became a huge hit in a number of foreign countries. The song was redone in English and released here as "You Promised Me." It's one of those fun songs that come along that kind of stick in your head. The album is full of catchy dance beats with synthesizers, flamenco guitars, accordions. It's nice to have someone come along with their own kind of sound.

Next is an artist from Greece named Despina Vandi. Her song "Gia" has made the rest of the world get up on their feet and dance. It was released a little over a year ago and finally has made it to America. It's a dance song that rolls along with chanting female vocals. Even if you can't make out what she is singing about the music will make you want to get up and groove. There are others but those are two that you don't want to miss out on. How about live music from some dance divas?

Madonna will be in Philadelphia July 4th. Here in Hershey we have Jessica Simpson July 2nd and Britney Spears on July 4th. You might also want to catch Annie Lenox formally of the Eurythmics in Hershey July 28th appearing with Sting.

Right here in Harrisburg for the Pride Festival July 31st is club diva Pepper Mashey.

That's all we have time for now. Check out the next issue of *Alternative Central* for more of DJ Barry B's world of music information.

Lehigh Valley Prom continued

schools. A group of young men from Harrisburg, some dressed to the 9s in women's clothing, made it in time to enter the drag queen contest.

Bethlehem's Anthony Lucas, 19, who served on the Gay Straight Alliance at Liberty High School and now studying at New York City's New School University, Lucas told the media, "It was E.E. Cummings who said, 'The hardest thing is to be yourself when the rest of the world is different."

Lucas said he went to his prom with a female friend, but other friends avoided their proms because they were gay. "I feel really great about this event," Lucas said. "I feel really good about the gay movement in the Lehigh Valley."

Freedom High School graduate Audrey Fairchild, 18, now attending Indiana University of Pennsylvania, said she attended Haven meetings for two years which helped her through high school. It also made starting college easier. "It's just a place I could feel comfortable," Fairchild said. "High school is not a great place to come out. If not for Haven, I may not have been able to come out."

Fairchild said she attended her senior prom, but it was an uncomfortable situation. Some friends knew she was gay, while others tried to find her a male date. She attended her traditional high school prom with other singles, but would "have loved to have something like Prizm Prom."

Special guests at the event were two people who felt they weren't welcome at their own local prom when it was held in the same hotel 20 years ago. When James Halleman was known as Jane, she wanted to go to the prom with her girlfriend, Lori Walck. They heard rumors of being turned away. ''It was going all around school that the football team would be waiting for us,'' said Walck, 37, of Bethlehem. ''We drove by and there were a bunch of people outside. We didn't know for sure, but we didn't want to take a chance."

The *Associated Press* reports education groups say more parents take school officials to court for not stopping other youngsters from bullying their children. Though hard to quantify the prevalence of such suits, the Association of Trial Lawyers of America says they aren't tracked, some say this type of litigation appears is rising. A case is ongoing in Tonganoxie, Kan., 30 miles west of Kansas City. The Anchorage School District settled a lawsuit out of court this year with a family that said their 14-year-old son tried to kill himself and was left permanently brain-damaged because of relentless bullying that school staffers knew about but didn't stop.

In January, the Eugene, Ore., School District agreed to pay $10,000 to settle a lawsuit filed by the family of a boy who was bullied and later attacked on a school bus. Similar lawsuits also have been filed in Canada, Australia and England.

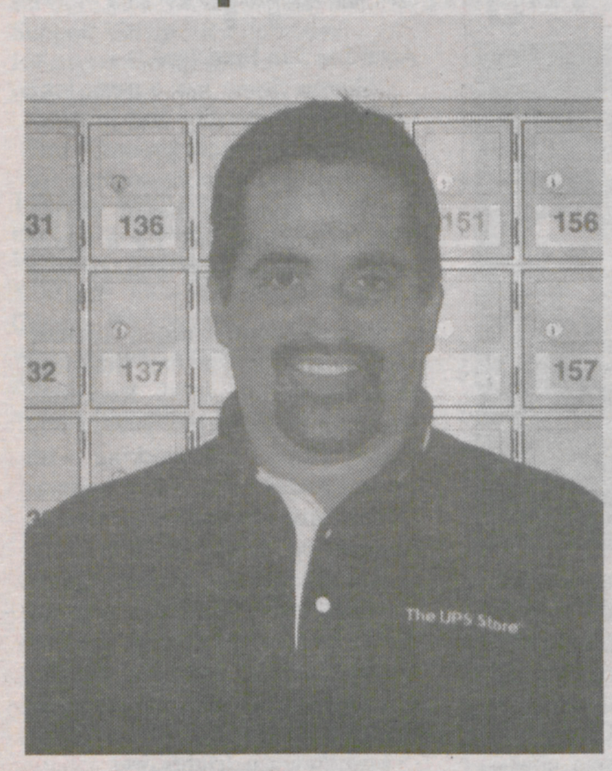
"I wish school systems would protect students from harassment and bullying because it is the right thing to do. But if they are doing it because they are afraid of being hit with lawsuits, bring on the lawsuits," said Kevin Jennings, executive director of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, a New York-based advocacy group. He said many of the taunts directed at bullied students are because they are perceived, correctly or incorrectly, as gay.

Walck says going to school was difficult then. ''The name-calling, getting chased home after school. It was hard." Her life is better now, she said. ''I'm out, and everybody knows it. I'm comfortable with myself and I don't care what anybody thinks.'' Halleman, 38, a fourth-generation steel worker who also lives in Bethlehem, said, ''It's not about male or female. It's about loving somebody."

In its two years history, more than 300 teenagers have passed through Haven. Weekly meetings are regularly attended by about 20 teens. "So you can see it's a much needed support and social system for the kids," said a representative of the group.

In 1980, a Rhode Island student had to go to federal court to win the right to attend prom as part of a same-sex couple. In 1981, the first gay prom took place in a church basement in Boston, sponsored by the Boston Alliance of Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Youth. Last week's event drew about 1,400, mostly from Massachusetts and other New England states.

Carmen Claudio Shares Entrepreneurial Secrets of Success



by Lisa Granite ,
Associate Editor

Carmen Claudio never wondered what he should do with his life.

"I always knew I'd be in the food industry," he said. "I used to cook our family meals when I was 14 or so. There was no doubt about it."

However, knowing what you're going to do with your life doesn't always mean that's what you end up doing. Claudio spent 20 years in the food management business before arriving at a crossroads in his career path.

"Fourteen hour days were no big deal, that was like an eight-hour day for me back then," he said. "That was my career and I had no plans to change it. Then a buddy of mine that I met in the food industry opened up the Lemoyne Mailboxes Etc. in 1991. At that point I was with the Hilton — I opened up the Golden Sheaf and was the assistant manager.

"I had been there for two years," he continued. "I went to visit him at his store and he said he needed a manager and was going to place an ad. And I said, 'You know what? I'll do it.' Here I was with 20 years in the food industry and suddenly I became his manager. Two years later, I bought him out."

Born in Chicago, Claudio was only a year and a half old when his family relocated to Steelton. He attended "Steel High," and has an associate of arts degree in food management from HACC. Although he spent most of his working life in the food industry, his temperament seems to be made for business ownership.

"I spent about seven-and-a-half years working at a county home, starting as a dietary aid and eventually becoming the dietary supervisor," he said. "At the age of 25, I had 65 people working under me and I was putting out 2,500 meals a day, so I always had that sense of responsibility."

"Through my years in the food service industry, people always said to me, 'You know, you need to own your own restaurant,'" he continued. "I love to socialize and be around people, so I think they saw that plus the fact that I worked long hours. I would have been good in a restaurant, but I just didn't want it."

After deciding on his career change, Claudio found his new hours quite freeing compared to the hectic schedule he was used to keeping.

"It was a whole different world," he remembered. "I'd have off every Sunday and only work half a day Saturday. If I wanted to take a week off, I could just take it, no problem."

Claudio then bought the Harrisburg Mailboxes Etc. store in July 2002. UPS bought out the chain and in 2003 both of his stores began carrying the UPS name. He is now one of the only two individual UPS multi-store owners in southcentral Pennsylvania.

And then, just as abruptly as he switched careers, he picked up the one he had left behind: One of Claudio's mailbox holders got him back into the food business in September 2003. The owner of a West Shore Farmer's Market stand, Pascale Gourmet Pie and Cake Company, asked him to invest. Claudio recalled that he was reluctant at first.

"I told him, 'I've been out the business for 10 years. I have no desire to go back,'" he said. "But he kept asking me, and I finally gave in. Now his stand is double the size of what it was originally. And now I'm back in the food business, partnered up with Frank, selling gourmet cakes and pies."

Assisting with the stand meant that Claudio had to say goodbye to the more regular hours he enjoyed as a business owner. During the busy times, he helps out at Pascale's early in the morning, then works at one of his two stores and then returns to Pascale's after the store closes.

"So I'm back doing those crazy hours!" he laughed. "But you know what, I'm still happy anyway. I have my moments, depending on the day — you get four phone calls and have three people in line and someone else is complaining about a package — then I get a little grumpy, but who wouldn't? I have a good life. I work hard, I love my life and I enjoy it all."

Which is a good thing, because there are difficulties that come with being the guy in charge. Claudio discovered that the cliché about finding good help is a cliché for a reason: "Finding trustworthy, hard-working employees is always the hardest thing [about owning a business], I think."

But being gay has never proven a problem in the business world. He laughed when asked if it had ever been an issue.

"I don't think so because I'm going into my fourth business! I'm not out there waving a flag screaming 'I'm gay,' but I'm not hiding it. I think if it was a problem I wouldn't be successful," he said.

The fourth business is still in the development stages. Claudio is looking to invest in real estate.

"Right now I'm looking at a multi-unit and I'll see how that goes," he said. "Hopefully I'll branch out in that field too."

His advice to those interested in owning a business is to be prepared for long hours and plenty of challenges.

"It's not easy," he said. "But if you're dedicated and enjoy what you do, at the end of the day you'll have no regrets."

So what does a multi-careered entrepreneur do in his spare time?

"Sleep!" he laughed. "No, I only sleep part time. Right now, I feel that I'm young enough that I can handle all this for now. But people ask me if I'm going to retire early, and I don't think I can. There's no way for me to just sit at home."

Transgender Corner

By Rachel Thompson, Allentown/Bethlehem Correspondent

"The brain makes the women or man, not the body." PULL-OUT

Although science is still inconclusive, what makes a transsexual (TS) person transsexual, as any TS will tell you, is the mind or soul, not of the external body parts or visual physical configuration.

English and Danish brain sex studies (University of Copenhagen, Dr. Louis Gooren, et. Al.) have demonstrated how male and female brains differ in structure, and that TS people have the brain of one gender and the body of the other.

A recent UCLA study isolated chromosomes that determine gender identity and sexual orientation. But this is not proof enough to satisfy the larger scientific community. Until a preponderance of scientific evidence is accumulated it will not be widely accepted that TS people are born and not made by choice.

Of course, there are mountains of case studies to examine from the psychological field that support what we TS people already instinctively know: gender identity is innate. However, case histories are not "proof". Therefore, it is not generally accepted by medical and psychological professionals; more due to opposing beliefs or ignorance of the subject than due to good science to the contrary. After all, even science depends on beliefs to some extent.

Medical professionals working with TS people are true believers, against the accepted social scientific standards. I read a study that said it takes 50 years for a new scientif-

continued on page 21

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Acceptance Requires Listening

by Trum Simmons

Can't we all just get along? Rodney King's plaintive cry speaks to the dialogue many of us struggle with in the Harrisburg region, especially during Pride month.

I recently taught a seminar for our annual Older American Education Days at HACC, and having decided this year to try out something a bit more provocative than usual on the group, I billed the session as an introduction to the exciting new field of Lesbian and Gay Studies (I teach this course at HACC).

One man volunteered that his son had come out to him at the age of 50 and that their relationship had really jelled after that. He asked his son why he had not come out earlier, and the son replied, "Dad—I thought you knew!"

A woman told us that she was there because her uncle had come out to the family several years ago and they had all been "shocked' by the revelation. She wanted to know how it is that some folks are gay and lesbian. Were they born that way?

Another woman (who immediately set off my gaydar, by the way) told the group that she had been a teacher in the public schools for 30 years and that she had seen firsthand the tragedy of so many lgbt youth not having role models among teachers and administrators, because the staff were afraid to be out to their students for fear of losing their jobs. She also pointed out that most schools still do not have student support groups yet, either.

This got to me, for I have many gay and lesbian friends in the public schools and here at your friendly local community college, and I also advise our Allies student group. At least at HACC several lesbian and gay staff are out, which improves the campus climate immeasurably.

At the end of the session another attendee came up with the best question of the day. "How do we talk with people who do not see things the way we do? How do we approach those who strongly disagree?" It's so complicated and tricky, she said.

Well, I don't have the answer for this, but I believe I know where we should start. We might begin by saying, "These issues are very difficult and I've really thought a lot about it. Let me tell you where I am, and what brought me to this place." Of course we should be ready to listen to the other person's story, no matter how much we might disagree.

It's the willingness to be honest and heartfelt about how we experience the world and why we see it as we do, that can be the start of more of us "getting along." Telling our stories with style and feeling is the first step, and listening to those of others with patience and empathy, the second. If the folks in our seminar could accomplish this, so can we all.

Forever Books continued

expanded to be "more than just a bookstore", the owners say. Although the core business will remain focused on the bookstore itself, it was very appealing to the three partners to branch out into more social, interactive events, designed to provide additional/ alternative things to do in the lgbt community.

Recent events have included a "Gay and Gay Friendly" Atlantic City bus trip that was held in June, "The L Word" parties, "Queer As Folk" parties, and a men's discussion group.

"We would like Forever Books to become 'the community bookstore'", said the three partners. "There is a need within our community for social activities other than just the bar scene. Our events are not intended to replace going to the bars, but merely provide an alternative from time to time, or maybe something to do before going out."

"We picked Steelton for financial reasons in getting the business started, and so far, it's paid off", said partners. "With community support for the store and participation in our social events, we hope to move to a more convenient location, when our current lease expires."

Forever Books is Harrisburg's best resource for lgbt books, magazines and gifts, along with social events. The space also offers a comfortable environment to just sit and visit with old and new friends.

Visit the store at 41 North Front Street in Steelton, PA, or go to www.foreverbooks.biz.; 717-939-5507.

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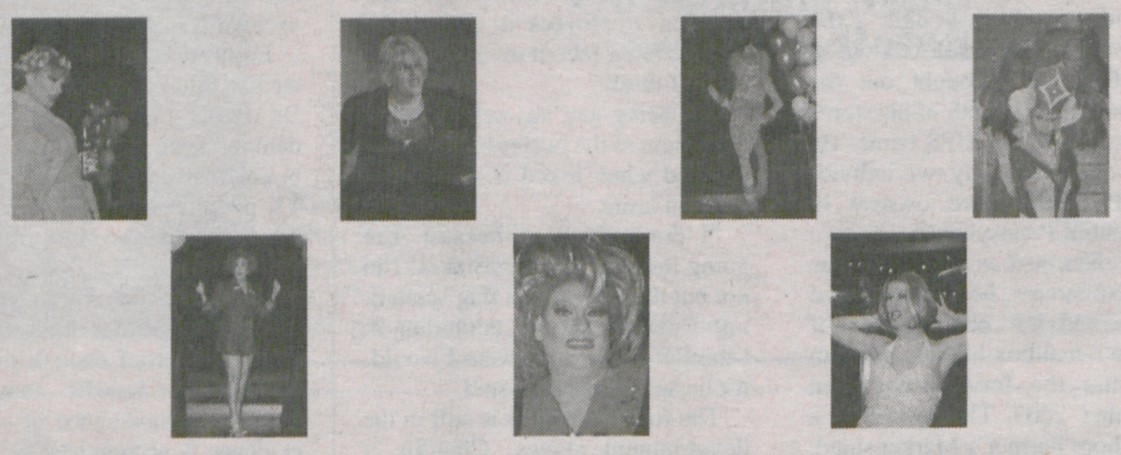

Biscuit, Makayla Summers Diamond, Starr Powers, April Showers, Ito, Glenda, Tequila Daniels, and many others!!!

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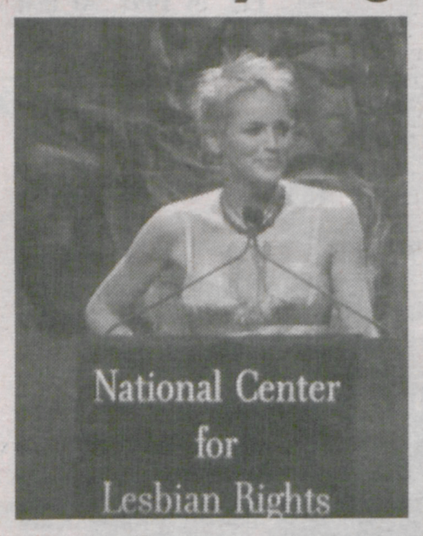
Sharon Stone Awarded for Gay Rights Support



Sharon Stone was recently recognized by the National Center for Lesbian Rights for her support of gay and lesbian civil rights. The actress who has helped raise millions of dollars for AIDS research and has portrayed lesbian characters in movies including "Basic Instinct," received the NCLR Spirit Award in San Francisco.

"Sharon Stone has a very long history of leadership and involvement with volunteer groups," said Ruth Herring, a spokeswoman for the San Francisco-based center. "We're honoring her for a whole range of things over a many year period."

Stone's contributions include raising money for the American Foundation for AIDS Research, founding the homeless youth camp Planet Hope, and working with Project Angel Food, a Los Angeles County program that brings food to homebound victims of AIDS.

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, who sparked a national debate by issuing marriage licenses to gay couples, presented the 46-year-old actress with the award at Saturday's event.

http://www.nclrights.org/.

SO WHAT'S THE NEWS FROM HOME?
MOM SAYS NORTH PRATT FALLS IS HAVING ITS FIRST EVER GAY PRIDE FESTIVAL!
SHE SAYS IT'LL BE IN THE CRUISY AREA OF THE VILLAGE PARK SO THAT THEY'LL HAVE MORE PEOPLE BESIDES THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
SOME KINDA PARTY...
THE PRIDE PARADE MARSHALL WILL BE THAT GEEKY STRAIGHT CONTESTANT FROM "BOY MEETS BOY" LAST YEAR.
REMEMBER ME?
COULD BE FUN! WANT TO GO?
AS LONG AS MOM ISN'T TRYING TO TRICK ME INTO COMING HOME FOR FATHERS' DAY!

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, Inc.

AskGLSH.org

Hours: M-F 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

717.234.0328

Get Connected to your Community

Social Organizations

Business Association for Gay and Lesbian (BAGAL) Social/Business Professionals. Meets every other month. PO Box 135 Harrisburg, PA 17108 Phone: 717.612.8445. Email: BAGAL-PA@aol.com.

Common Roads - Youth group. Ages 14-24. Social/Information/Support. Social activities every Friday eve at 7:00 P.M. 1300A North 3rd St, Harrisburg. Email: info@commonroads.org. Website: www.commonroads.org. Voice: 717.920.9534.

Gay & Lesbian Organization of Reading & Allentown -P O Box 541,Bethlehem , PA 18016, non-profit social group for adult men & women, singles & couples. 1 or 2 activities each month including potlucks, bowling, movie nights, hikes, dinners, etc. Email: glorain-pa@aol.com.

Harrisburg Gay Men's and Women's Volleyball - Social/Recreation. Every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Baughman United Methodist Church, New Cumberland Cost: $2.50, Contact: Jim at 233.3172.

Harrisburg Women's Rugby Club - Looking for players for summer and fall league. No experience necessary. Email: rugby-dog34@aol.com.

Lambda Car Club - Social/Recreation. Meets monthly. Email: Buickbum@aol.com Voice: Contact John Ball at 717.238.9766.

Pennsmen. Leather/Levi/Social. Membership is open to anyone over the age of 21 with an interest in the lifestyle. Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at the 704 Strawberry. Contact: Steve at 717.232.3785. Website: www.pennsmen.org, Email: jesjames71@comcast.net.

Pride Festival of Central PA - Planning meetings. Meets second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., Volunteers welcome. Email: info@harrisburgpride.org. Website: www.harrisburgpride.org. Voice: 717.234.0328.

The Rainbow Bowling League - ABC Bowling Lanes - Eisenhower Blvd, Harrisburg. The Rainbow Bowling League bowls every Thursday at 8:55 p.m. The Rainbow Bowling League is considered a "mixed" league: in other words, both men and women are welcome. We invite anyone interested in joining. Openings for individual bowlers, teams and substitutes. Contact: Mark or Robert 763-8444 for more details.

Renaissance LSV - Transgendered. Social/Information/Support. Meets the 1st Saturday of each month. Email: renaissancelsv@hotmail.org. Website: www.ren.org. Voice: 717.780.1578.

Susquehanna Valley Bears - PO BOX 61478, Harrisburg, PA 17106-1478. Website:: www.svbears.com, Email: svbears@svbears.com

Susquehanna Club - Recreation/Camping. Membership organization. Website: www.susq.org, Email: camp@susq.org.

Womyn's Chorus of Central PA - Social - Regular rehearsals every Monday night at 7 PM. We need YOUR voice and spirit. Email info@cpwchorus.org. Website: www.cpwchorus.org or call 717.234.4825.

Spiritual

Metropolitan Community Church of the Spirit (MCC) - 2973 Jefferson St. Harrisburg, PA 17110, Phone: 717.236.7387, Email: mccofthespirit@cs.com, Website: www.mccofthespirit.org. "A Diverse, Christian Community, Fostering Personal, Spiritual, and Community Growth" MCC of the Spirit reaches out to ALL people and offers many ministry opportunities such as: Gospel Choir, Praise Band, and Just Jam. Sunday services are: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 7p.m.

St. Michael Lutheran Church - 118 State St. Harrisburg, PA 17101, Phone: 717.234.0092, Sunday Email: stmichael@paonline.com, Website: www.paonline.com/stmike.

Temple Beth Shalom - 913 Allendale Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, Phone: 717.697.2662, Fax: 717.795.7749 Contact: Rabbi Carl Choper, Email: tbs.temple@verizon.net, Website: www.tbshalom.org. Synagogue with open and affirming LGBT position.

Unitarian Church of Harrisburg - 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17113, Phone: 717.564.4761 Email: uch@paonline.com, Website: www.paonline.com/uchuua. Provides a mutually supportive liberal religious environment, which nurtures each individual's free and responsible search for personal meaning and growth. Seeking to be a caring and democratic community, we gather to articulate, question, and affirm our beliefs and to develop the courage to act upon them.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York - 925 S. George St, York, PA 17403, Phone: 717.845.8212, Mon. - Thurs., 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m. - noon. Email: office@uucy.org, Website: www.uucy.org.

Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley - 2 Forge Rd, PO Box 207, Boiling Springs, PA 17007, Phone: 717.249.8944. The Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley are proud to bring the voice and the practice of liberal religion to the Cumberland Valley region. All are welcome to join us in worship regardless of age, race, religious background, class, or sexual orientation. We come together to support one another in our continuing commitment to a free and loving search for spiritual meaning and to the expression of that meaning in our community and in our personal lives. Adult services and children's religious education are offered every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

continued below

Unity Church of Harrisburg, 927 Wertzville Road, Enola, Pa 17025, Phone: 717 732-9773. Fax: 717 732-9074, Website: www.unitychurchharrisburg.com, Sunday services, classes, Spiritual & social Support Group for Alternative Lifestyles Group meets twice month.

Vision of Hope Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) - 130 East Main Street, Mountville, PA 17554. Phone: 717.285.9070 Worship - Sunday 10:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Contact: Rev. Debbie Coggin. Website: www.visionofhopemcc.com. Email: visionofhopemcc@aol.com.

Support Groups

TANK, Young Gay/Bi Guys 18-29 who want to create community, attend social events this summer, call 717-215-8437; tankhbg@yahoo.com; wrote TANK, 410 Division St., Suite 100, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, Inc. - Phone helpline: (717)234.0328, M-F 6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m. Some weekend support. Website: www.AskGLSH.org. Email: info@AskGLSH.org. 1300A North 3rd St. Harrisburg, PA 17102.

Lambda AA – Harrisburg - Support group for recovering lesbian and gay alcoholics using 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Quaker Meeting House. 6th and Herr Sts. Lower level. (717)234-5390. Hours: Mon 8 p.m. and Fri 8:30 p.m.

Parents and Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) of Central Pennsylvania - Support for GLBT families, friends, resources, publications, information from National office & small library. Meets 3rd Monday of each. Email: pflagcenpa@yahoo.com, Tressler/DIAKON: Voice: (717)795.0330. 24-hr helplineL717)728.8800.

Parents and Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) of York. Meets 3rd Monday at 7 p.m., Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York, 925 S. George St. York, PA 17404. For more information call (717)846.2560.

The Quest Group – a supportive, loving spiritual community for gays, lesbians and those who love them that promotes an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance and provides an opportunity to know each other through God and to know God through each other. This is a social group also. Meets the second and fourth Fridays of the month. Unity Church of Harrisburg. Enola, PA. (717)975-2028.

Rainbow AA of York (Gay and Lesbian AA). Meets Thursday and Saturday at 8 p.m. Trinity Lutheran, 415 N. West St. York. For more information (717)846.2560 or Email: chuck-dk@aol.com.

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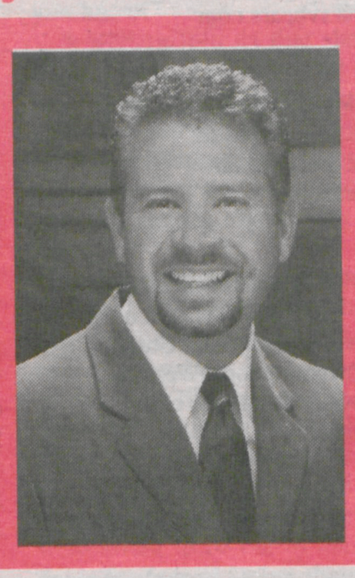

Region's Renaissance Transgender Association Active

Region's Renaissance Transgender Association Active

The mission of The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc. is to provide the very best comprehensive education and caring support to transgendered individuals and those close to them. The organization accomplishes its mission by offering a variety of carefully selected programs and resources focused on the factors affecting a transgendered person's life.

Renaissance sponsors local support groups where individuals can find safe space to learn about transgender behavior. At present, there are 11 Chapters around the country. The Renaissance philosophy is open, non-discriminatory membership for everyone.

The group also publishes a monthly magazine, Transgender Community News, that provides an open forum for discussion of gender-related social, political and legal issues, as well as basic information about events within the transgender community. An annual subscription is $30. Most chapters and affiliates also publish local newsletters.

Renaissance also provides a series of papers with basic information on a variety of transgender topics. Our Background Papers provide basic information on TG issues.

The group's Community Outreach Bulletins give useful information on how to start and run a local support group. If you are interested in starting a local group read Outreach Bulletin #1 and contact the Executive Director. Renaissance operates a Speakers Bureau through its Outreach Program Office. Trained speakers are available for college, university and media venues.

Renaissance provides a connection to resources for female to male transgendered people. Click here for female to male information. The group presented the 4th International Congress on Crossdressing, Sex & Gender in October of 2000. Visit the Congress Page for more information. For information: www.ren.org.

Key West continued

Viva, Key West!

La te da Hotel is Las Vegas in the heart of Old Town Key West. The By George Bar draws chatty crowds for drinks amid the original works of Picasso and ancient Spanish sculptors. Christopher Peterson and Randy Roberts are among the cabaret performers who work the Crystal Room, paying tribute to Cher, Marilyn Monroe and other female icons. La te da also hosts Gay Bingo nights, complete with free pizza, drinks deals and benefits for local charities. The outdoor restaurant overlooking the garden pool serves gourmet meals daily, as well as complimentary continental breakfast to its mixed (but largely gay) clientele. Off-season rates start at $85 per night.

"La te da embodies the friendliness and funkiness of Key West," Hotel Manager Dan Lotten noted. "It's a great property and really fun to work here."

· *La te da: 1125 Duval Street; 305-296-6706; www.lateda.com*

Eves of Eden

Pearl's Rainbow, described as Key West's distinctive resort for women, features 38 rooms, two heated swimming pools and two hot tubs (bathing suits optional). Co-owners Heather Carruthers and Leslie Leonelli have spent the past three years renovating the property, including a main building that served as a cigar factory in the late 1800s. They're especially proud of their staff and the types of amenities that Pearl's Rainbow offers, among them outdoor massage and a concierge service that can arrange for outings and recommend area restaurants. Pearl's Patio is the poolside bar and grill where guests and locals can hang out over drinks and sandwiches. Off-season rates start at $99 per night.

"This is a paradise for women," Carruthers expressed. "Staff goes

continued on page 22

Calling All Lesbians!

Claudia Contessini, claudia@lesbianresearch.com, writes: For many years I've been involved in establishing organizations for lesbians – beginning with a branch of Daughters of Bilits in 1969. At the moment my contribution is around research into the important issues that concern us as lesbians.

I'm trying to reach every lesbian on Earth. Can you help?

I'm seeking to create a community of lesbians – a very large community – who would like to fill in a survey questionnaire, taking just a few minutes, about three times a year. Members of this community will receive a free monthly E-Zine (email newsletter) in which interesting and useful insights from this research will be published.

Other E-Zine content will include information about optimizing health, sexual issues and relationship and lifestyle information – based on the rest of current research and on my 30+ years of clinical experience. I'll also be publishing a book informed by the survey results, which will be available through another site – in time. Those who fill in the survey get a chance, if they wish, to win copies of the book.

So I'm asking lesbians all over the world if they'd be willing to go to my website, fill in the survey form (it takes about 10 minutes) and subscribe to the E-Zine. (It's incredibly easy to unsubscribe

continued on page 21

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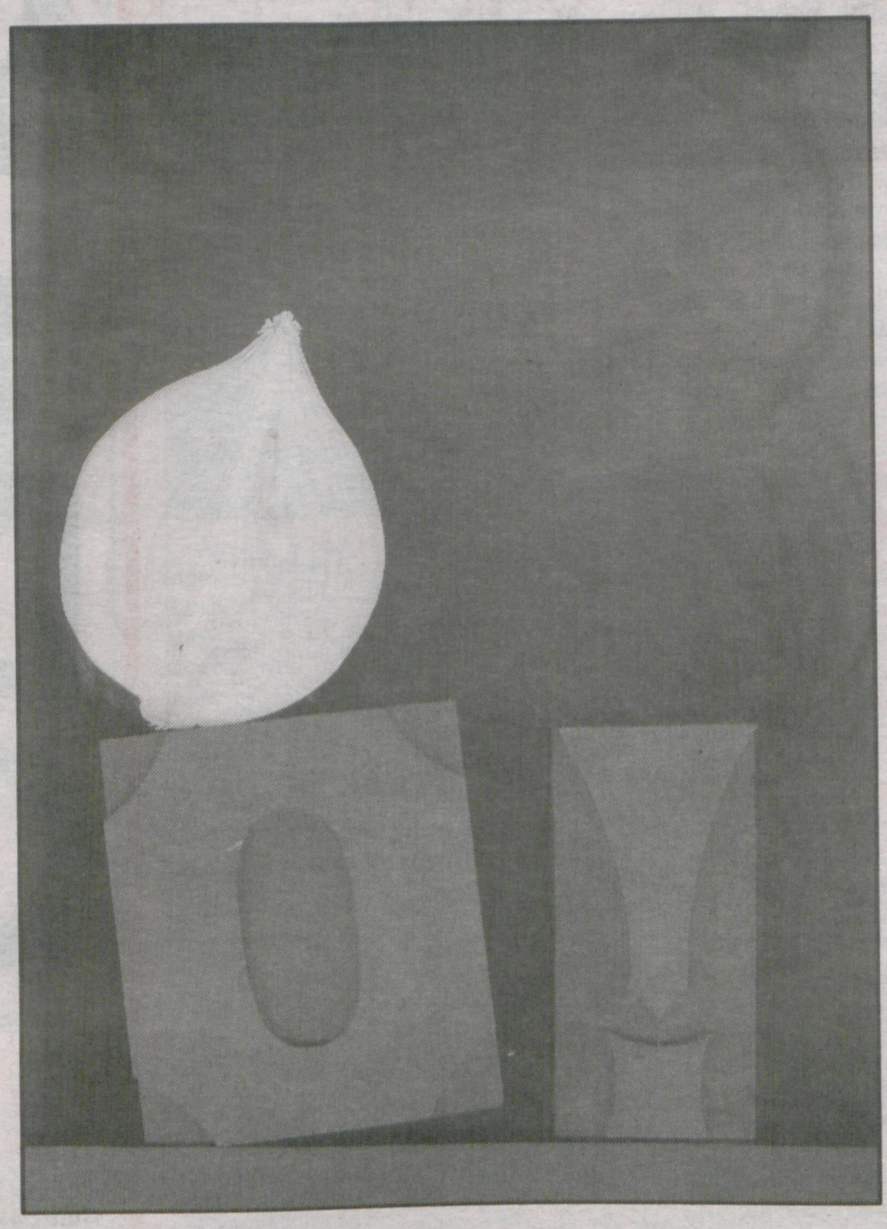

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Adios Marlboro Man

By Sophia Gonzalez,
State College Correspondent

Chanel sunglasses in December, Armani turtlenecks and the scent of cologne saturated my kitchen.

Feelings of inadequacy and embarrassment replaced this once confident and eager host. I was out-styled. And not by another woman, but by men. Me – a notably fashion-conscious, metropolitan woman. I was out-dressed by these young men, friends from Atlanta coming to visit for the holidays.

What happened to the American cowboy? What happened to the guy who embraces his body odor and who wears hats so he doesn't have to comb his hair? I expected a pair of disheveled, unorganized, manner-impaired and fashion-unconscious guys at my doorstep.

Instead, I got a pair of metrosexuals.

This new emerging class of men makes the American cowboy a thing of the past. These men are not only drawing attention because they look good but because their influence is inescapable.

A metrosexual is heterosexual, well-educated, sophisticated, driven, with a dash of feminity. He can easily go from having drinks with his buddies and playing football to getting a facial and manicure. At the salon, our metrosexual male will be one of the few waiting for a cut, style, and color. His bathroom counter holds mostly men's hair-care products, mosturizers, and cologne. On his free time, he is pumping iron at the gym and receiving lots of praise because he looks good. He knows it. And loves it.

"The metrosexual is the male ideal for the 21st century. He is a man of style, sophistication and self-awareness, strong and diverse, secure in his masculinity, and someone always able to put others in his company at ease," writes Michael Flocker, author of *The Metrosexual Guide to Style : A Handbook for the Modern Man*.

The term was first coined in 1994 by writer Mark Simpson to describe British soccer star David Beckham. Since then, celebrities from Brad Pitt and George Clooney to Bill Clinton and Arnold Schwarzenegger have been labeled metrosexuals. In many ways, Justin Timberlake and P.Diddy are today's metrosexual drawn from yesterday's Cary Grant and Paul Newman.

The media is to thank for the popularity of metrosexualism, which is no longer confined to major cities but also reaching small towns and suburbs.

New male-targeted magazines endorse the qualities of the metrosexual male, according to Richard Trubo in a WebMD feature. *Maxim,* for instance, features more pages of men's fashion depicted in sleek suits, sporting abs and biceps.

The demand is so great that haute couture designers, like Giorgio Armani, cater specifically to the new metrosexual elite. "It's a question of aesthetics, not gender," Giorgio Armani told the Associated Press. His metrosexual male for the Winter 2004 collection relaxes his wardrobe by day, comfortable in honey-beige in tweed jackets or coal-black, versatile slacks and thick sweaters. At night, our metrosexual leaves the layers behind, while his long and wispy hair intensifies his sexual appeal from an original sweater tuxedo of interwoven silk and jersey.

Let us not forget the new TV program *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, a program where a group of five fabulously dressed homosexual men, hence the term "Fab 5 ," transform some lucky but clueless man into a metrosexual.

Even everyone's favorite "big-boned" cartoon character from *South Park*, Cartman, has caught the fever, saying a metrosexual is someone who is "straight, but appreciates the gay culture.

And there you have it.

In a world where a declining economy limits the number of rewarding job opportunities, professionals must increase their marketabilityAppearance has always been linked to success, but now even more so. To play the part, you've got to *be* the part - and metrosexuals buy into this philosophy. And they do buy – a cool $2.5 billion last year on the male grooming industry, according to *Erie-Times News*.

Some argue that the movement is degenerating masculinity, but others deem it "masculinity redefined."

Growing acceptance of alternative lifestyles, gender roles, and social values also accounts for the metrosexual's arrival, according to the *Miami Herald*. Last June a marketing communications agency in New York City, Euro RSCG Worldwide, explored this concept. The agency surveyed men ages 21 to 48 throughout the U.S. on masculinity-related topics. The report concluded there is "an emerging wave of men who chafe against the restrictions of traditional male roles." These men "do what they want, buy what they want, enjoy what they want – regardless of whether some people might consider these things unmanly."

"The modern man has evolved. If you're not open to new ideas and a well-rounded life, you're gonna get left behind," former metrosexual and 25 year-old Erie real estate agent Laban Marsh told *Erie-Times News*.

The days of the rugged Marlboro man, as Dr. Laura affectionately calls him, are long gone.

For now, I guess I'll just have to settle for metrosexual David Beckman. Not that I'm complaining.

Sophia J. Gonzalez is Penn State University sophomore journalism and French major.

Calling All Lesbians continued

later if you decide you don't want it). And then to send a note to any individual lesbians, appropriate mailing lists, people who know lots of lesbians, etc, etc, with the address, and some encouragement to fill in the survey, and sign up for the E-Zine. And most importantly, to send it on.....I am, you see, trying to reach every lesbian on Earth.....

The address is:
www.LesbianResearch.com.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort. I'm going to do very good things with the information – things that will be very helpful to lesbians everywhere. So, worth the effort, if you're willing!

Claudia Contessini, Ph.D., is Director, Online Institute for Lesbian Research.

Transgender Corner continued

ic fact to become commonly accepted in the medical and/or science community. This is why infant intersex operations still occur in the USA at a rate of five daily. Most intersex individuals will tell you that infant reconstructive surgery is unnecessary and a real bad idea. Bad science prevails in this example based on an inerrant socialized medical standard.

For the transsexual community things are changing in our favor. More and more medical and psychological professionals are getting it. But we still need that pesky preponderance of empirical evidence to convince the medical naysayer and right wing political opposition that we are a legitimate people in need of help rather than ridicule.

It's important that we provide sound evidence for political, medical and social acceptance.

Until we can convince the world that we are indeed real, as we know we are, we will continue to be pariahs. So, what do we do? One thing every TS can and should do is to make a will and leave your body to science with the stipulation that your brain should be used for brain sex studies. Even the deep stealth can do this. After you're dead, will you care what people think? Or Wouldn't you rather be a hero for the TS community and human rights? Sounds like a no brainier to me.

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Santorum Shunned by Cheyney Graduates

by Suzy Martin
Philadelphia Correspondent

No one was more surprised than Cheyney University's graduating seniors when the nation's oldest historically black college invited notoriously right-wing U.S. Senator Rick Santorum to speak at commencement this year. At the May 8th ceremony, in Thornbury, just outside of Philadelphia, more than half the graduates turned their backs on him, nearly drowning out his speech with boos and shouts of "Get off the stage!"

Why would Cheyney invite Santorum in the first place?

In a May 2003 press release announcing Santorum's hosting of a Historically Black Colleges and Universities Congressional Forum as part of a Republican effort to build better bridges with the African-American community, then-president of Cheyney Dr. W. Clinton Pettus is quoted as crediting the senator for securing the preservation of a historic campus building, a collaborative center for teacher preparation and money for an urban aquaculture program. Could Santorum be the unsung savior of black colleges?

No way, say students. BFA graduate Judith Young, who told the Philadelphia Tribune that Cheyney's administration had ignored the objections of students who met with them to request a different speaker, she said. Adding that [Santorum] has blocked financial grants for students at the university. In fact, the senator has consistently voted against federal tax breaks for college tuition and cuts to student loan fees during his decade in office, the same type of loans that he himself took advantage of as a student.

But most offensive to graduates were Santorum's comments on family values in the black community, comments that observers found odd at a ceremony to launch future professionals. According to the Delaware County Times, Santorum claimed that young people without a traditional family structure were more likely to commit crimes and use or sell drugs. When Santorum remarked that only one-third of black children have two-parent families, a woman in the audience stood up, pointed to the protesting students and shouted, "I'm about ready to join them!"

It's not the first time Santorum's been snubbed by the newly highly educated. Last year, after an *Associated Press* interview in which the senator notoriously compared gay sex to bigamy, incest and bestiality, about 100 students and faculty at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia walked out of his commencement address there.

Sex-advice columnist Dan Savage even inspired his readers to come up with an eternal shaming of the anti-sex senator: They invented a new term for a frothy mixture of lube and fecal matter that is sometimes the byproduct of anal sex.

It's now called "spreading Santorum". For schooling on that subject, visit www.spreadingsantorum.com.

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Key West continued

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"It's the only place you can stay and have all those amenities," Owner Jon Allen pointed out. "And having all these different types of rooms gives us a broader range of rates so that we can cater for those with lots of bucks who want space and those on a budget."

· ***Islandhouse: 1129 Fleming Street; 305-294-6284; 800-890-6284; www.islandhousekeywest.com***

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Musical Tribute to Couples
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
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2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
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Voodoo Lovehounds
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